

The most rewarding outing for those interested in Tibetan art is a visit to the four villages around Longwu.

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A kind of slapstick melodrama, *Throat* takes the form of an absurdist crash through a nightmarish world of modern relationships.

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Leopard-skin patterns, flowers, and traditional Chinese elements were common themes at China Fashion Week.

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By Chu Meng

In response to the recent dramatic increase in deaths of Chinese working overseas, the government has begun exploring ways in which citizens employed in hazardous situations abroad can be better protected.

The State Council held a special working conference on July 19 this year to discuss the safety protection of overseas citizens and organizations, and in October, Foreign Minister Li Zhaoxing set up a new department of external security affairs, to cope with increasing non-traditional security factors that are putting Chinese citizens overseas at risk.

On June 10, some 20 gunmen burst into a construction site in Afghanistan, killing 11 Chinese employees of ZTE Corporation in one of the bloodiest attacks on foreigners in that country. On May 3, a group of Pakistani terrorists detonated a remote-controlled car bomb at Gwadar port in south-west Pakistan. Three Chinese engineers were killed and nine injured in the attack.

One Chinese security firm is currently seeking ways to expand its operations overseas in

According to Hu, being employed as a bodyguard by his firm is serious work, and requires the highest level of protection skills, along with impeccable behavior, good morals and self-discipline.



Photo by Imaginechina

Protection Inc

Former soldiers to serve as bodyguards for overseas workers

order tackle this new global phenomenon, so far without success. China's first private bodyguard and security firm registered its trademark in September this year. However an ambitious move to open a branch office in the Middle East was met with a firm "No" last Wednesday by the Ministry of Public Security. The private bodyguard firm, called Ping'an Shangwu Liyi is based in Ningbo, Zhejiang Province.

Beijing Today found company's office in an ordinary double-room suite of a nondescript six-story apartment building in suburban Ningbo. Hu Xiangyun, the 41-year-old manager of the private bodyguard firm is a native of Ningbo. Hu told *Beijing Today* in his office Tuesday, "We are providing a wide range of very specialized security, protection and training services, on a standby or contract basis, to wealthy individuals and famous society and commercial figures. At present we are planning to extend our services abroad, but we have encountered some obstacles."

Hu paused and frowned before continuing, "To safeguard the security of any citizen's life and property is a guaranteed right by our constitution. And as you can see "life" is put before "property." As the government allows all kinds of insurance services to safeguard people's property overseas, why doesn't it allow such insurance services to safeguard people's lives overseas? Our firm does nothing that violates the existing laws and regulations." Pointing to the framed trademark certificate on the wall behind his desk, he continued, "we were granted this trademark after two years of examination by the government."

In August 2002, new trademark registration regulations were issued, increasing the



Hu Xiangyun



The Ningbo office of Ping'an Shangwu Liyi

Photos by Chu Meng

number of registrable categories of goods and services from 42 to 45. Private bodyguard firms and companies specializing in providing personal security services and tracking down missing persons were one of the new services. Such firms can now apply to register their own trademark. While the government does not openly support such kinds of business, in which the boundary between legality and illegality is often somewhat vague, the new regulations in fact gave the green light for the birth of a new industry.

For Hu, however, legal uncertainties are not the source of the headache. "I truly understand the government's caution towards anything new in the market. It has to ensure social stability and public security. Any mistake has the potential to ruin the entire industry," he said.

"What I am thinking about these days is setting up an operation in Afghanistan, in order to safeguard the personal security of overseas Chinese, and to help overseas Chinese companies operate in a safe environment. However to be a hero is not that

simple. The problem is we cannot get approval to hire and use military equipment such as guns and bullet-proof vests."

Zhang Guanghua, public relations officer from the Beijing Municipal Public Security Bureau told *Beijing Today* Monday, "The law governing the use of guns and military equipment set by the State Council is printed on the bureau's website. The state clearly forbids any units or individuals keeping, making, trafficking or hiring guns. And no one is allowed to take guns out of the country. This is a rigidly set law, and nobody can break it."

It is this law that has been the stumbling block for Hu's plans to set up operations in Afghanistan. But a fax in September this year gave him new hope. The fax was sent from RDB American Bodyguard and Security International Service's Chinese office. It said the Ohio-based company, which specializes in international personal security, wanted to cooperate with Hu and provide his company with arms overseas, if necessary. While Hu at first thought his problems were

solved, the head of RDB's China Office then called him to say that approval from the Chinese government was a precondition for any future cooperation.

"We operate on a high capacity and can respond to a pending or immediate crisis situation with the expertise and resources necessary to resolve any situation. We work on a contract basis and provide personal close protection services to clients 24 hours a day," he said.

According to Hu, being employed as a bodyguard by his firm is serious work, and requires the highest level of protection skills, along with impeccable behavior, good morals and self-discipline. Knowledge of local languages and customs are also important. A bodyguard's sole job is to protect the employer, with his life if necessary. All the employees are former soldiers. They are all taller than 178 centimeters, have a good education background and are inconspicuous in their appearance. They have also undergone special training in such areas as close-quarters combat, surveillance, air traffic security, un-

armed combat, advanced driving and hostage rescue techniques.

In September this year, Hu held talks with president of the Jinan-based Fourteenth China Railway Construction Group, Han Fengxian on a planned overseas cooperation contract. However the talks were aborted because Hu could not provide any legal certificates or authoritative approval for his bodyguards to carry arms.

When *Beijing Today* spoke to Han Fengxian yesterday, he said "I myself would be very happy if our own bodyguards could go out of the country and protect Chinese contracted workers and officials or researchers who live and work in high-risk overseas areas. But now we have to spend a fortune to hire American bodyguards in Afghanistan. If one day Hu Xiangyun can get official approval for his personnel to carry guns, I will sign a contract with him without a second thought."

Han said his company, which had projects in Afghanistan and Pakistan – both high risk locations – has taken concrete measures to ensure the security of its overseas projects. The company has hired local security guards and invited security experts to instruct workers in security precautions, such as how to deal with kidnapping attempts and avoid bombings.

Most Chinese contractors operating abroad have come to realize the necessity of buying accidental injury insurance for their employees. Otherwise, they face paying huge amounts of compensation for their workers in the event of any deadly incidents.

In the past, due to the absence of such insurance, contractors

have had to pay compensation to families of the victims, inflating their production costs.

After the terrorist attack in Afghanistan, for example, the contractor on the aid project, the Fourteenth China Railway Construction Group, paid damages of 400,000 yuan (US \$48,000) to the families of each of the 11 murdered workers. The company has also paid all medical expenses for the four injured in the attack and will pay them compensation later, Han was quoted as saying in a report in *China Daily* after the attack in June.

Hu Xiangyun said to *Beijing Today*, "Han Fengxian called me again Sunday and told me that at present they are bidding for another two or three projects in Afghanistan. And if they get the bids they would hire our Chinese bodyguards this time. He also said our security personnel could go abroad as employees of the corporation. As the Afghanistan government allows the trade of guns and military equipment, those bodyguards can be equipped with weapons there."

Zhang Shuguang, a professor from Renmin University School of Law told *Beijing Today* Monday, "With the development of the market economy, there are more and more wealthy people who require some form of personal security. And with an increasing number of Chinese trading, living and studying overseas, the security concerns for overseas Chinese is equally important. This provides a potential security market abroad. However operations home and abroad should conform to local laws and regulations."

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Foreign Investment Permitted in Media Joint Ventures

By Qiu Jiaoning

A new regulation to take effect from next Monday will allow foreign investors to take minority stakes in television production joint ventures for the first time, according to an announcement by the State Administration of Radio Film and Television.

Under the regulation, which was publicized on the administration's website Wednesday, foreign partners can hold up to 49 percent of shares in joint ventures. Such foreign partners must specialize in the area of radio or TV, in order that the local industry can benefit from expertise. The Chi-

nese partners must be the existing holders of a production license, regardless of whether they are private or state invested.

In addition, such joint ventures must have registered capital of at least US \$2 million, or US \$1 million in the case of animation companies. A unique logo is also required to ensure they are not used to promote the brands of foreign partners.

The regulation stipulates that foreign-invested TV ventures can't enter news and current affairs programming. By requiring not less than two-thirds of China-related programs, the government

will ensure the ventures produce more original content for the local audiences rather than directly adapt overseas programs.

Viacom, the third-largest media company in the US, has announced plans for two production ventures, including one with Shanghai Media Group to make and sell children's programs. The company reached a verbal agreement with Beijing Television for a second venture to co-produce Chinese-language music and entertainment programs, Viacom CEO Sumner Redstone announced on September 24.

Disney, the second-largest

US media company, is currently in talks with Southern Media Corporation to make TV programs in Guangdong Province, Southern Media announced on October 15. "We'd love a channel in China," Disney president Robert Iger said in an interview with Bloomberg in Shanghai on October 14.

Other companies, including Rupert Murdoch's News Corporation and Seven Network of Australia, are also expected to be part of a flurry of activity as foreign investors seek to play a greater role in China's fast-growing TV industry, *Financial Times* reported.

Zhu Hong, deputy director of the statute and law department at the administration told *Beijing Today*, "TV production joint ventures are under preparation and will be set up after the new regulation takes effect next week. However, the first Sino-foreign film joint venture, Zhongying-Warner-Hengdian Film and Television, was launched recently, setting a good example for other media ventures. Zhongying, Warner and Hengdian respectively have stakes of 40, 30 and 30 percent respectively, representing foreign, state and private investment."

Government Launches Debt-to-shares Enterprise Investigation

By Sun Yongjian

The State-owned Assets Supervision and Administration Commission (SASAC) of the State Council issued a statement Monday announcing its decision to launch a comprehensive investigation into enterprises in which debts are converted into shares. According to the statement, the move is aimed at guarding against financial risk.

The statement, which was issued on SASAC's website, stresses that the investigation has been approved by the Ministry of Finance and the People's Bank of China.

As an important measure launched to promote the reform of state-owned enterprises (SOEs) and to alleviate these enterprises' liabilities, the government has allowed some SOEs to convert their creditor's rights into equity since 1999, meaning that the creditor's rights of some commercial banks against SOEs have been allowed to be converted into equity, according to a report in *China Times* Tuesday.

All of the debts-to-shares enterprises approved by the State Council will be covered in this round of investigation, including registered new companies, unregistered new companies and suspended companies, the SASAC statement said.

The investigation will be launched in three phases, and is scheduled to be completed by February 2005, according to the SASAC's timetable.

The investigation is a measure launched to guard against financial risks, to alleviate non-performing loans in the commercial banks and improve enterprises governing structure, according the China Time's report.



Construction resumed Tuesday after a six year delay on the Shanghai World Financial Center. When it is completed in 2007, the 492-meter skyscraper will be one of the tallest buildings in the world. Xinhua Photo

TV Broadcasting to Go Digital

By Annie Wei

China plans to switch to all digital TV broadcasting in the coming 10 years general director of the State Administration of Radio, Film and Television (SARFT) Xu Guangchun said at a forum on 21st century broadcasting and TV media Sunday.

According to Xu, the plan includes three major steps: the first is to introduce digital cable TV; the second is digital broadcasting via satellite and the third is to promote digital TV throughout the country when Beijing is holding the 2008 Olympic.

Xu said the goal is for digital broadcasting to cover all China by means of cable, satellite and wireless, and to abandon analogue broadcasting by 2015.

At present, most TV receivers in use are still analogue, although the other processes, such as program editing and transmission have already adopted digital format. Digital TV adapters, which sit on top of existing TV sets, are the key to solving the problem of transition to the new format, according to Xu.

To expand the digital TV market, Shanghai Cable Network has been providing consumers with free box-top adapters since August, vice-director of SARFT Zhang Haitao was quoted as saying in *Beijing Youth Daily* Monday. Zhang also said that SARFT had scheduled the promotion of digital TV broadcasting in different areas, with big cities like Beijing and Shanghai scheduled to be the first to realize digital TV and broadcasting.

China to Help Establish Labor Unions in Multi-national Enterprises

By Sun Yongjian

The All-China Federation of Trade Unions (ACFTU) is willing to help establish labor unions in multinational enterprises, Xinhua reported Wednesday.

An investigation by the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress last month found that some foreign-invested enterprises, including US-based retail giant Wal-Mart, have not permitted the establishment of labor unions. The ACFTU declared that such refusal was in violation of the Labor Union Law, and that the ACFTU was considering filing a lawsuit against Wal-Mart, the Xinhua report said.

Wal-Mart released a statement on Tuesday explaining that the reason no labor union had been established was that Wal-Mart employees had not put forward such a request. "If the Chinese staff put forward a request to establish a labor union, Wal-Mart will respect their request and implement the responsibilities and obligations regulated by the labor union law," the statement said.

But an official from the legal affairs department of the ACFTU told Xinhua that Wal-Mart's stance had changed, as it was no longer refusing to establish a labor union under the pretext of "international conventions."

"But if Wal-Mart continues ignoring the requests of staff to establish a labor union, it will be in violation of the labor union law," the official stressed.

Lunar Exploration Plans Unveiled

By Deng Minjie

China will invest 1.4 billion yuan on the first stage of the Chang'er lunar exploration project, it was announced Sunday at the annual conference of the China Association of Science and Technology in Bo'ao, Hainan Province.

Ouyang Ziyuan, chief scientist of the project and member of the Chinese Academy of Sciences said the project aims to launch a moon exploration satellite before 2007.

According to Ouyang, an unmanned lunar probe program will be completed within 13 years. The exploration program involves three major stages, namely, a lunar orbital probe; a lunar probe based on soft landing and moon scouting vehicles by the year of 2012, and gathering of lunar samples for further research by 2017.

In addition, the chief scientist considers that after fulfilling these goals, China will continue to research and develop a strategy for launching a manned moon probe, possibly cooperating internationally on establishing a base on the moon.

Rules Set for ETF Trading

China's securities clearing house has issued regulations for the trading of exchange-traded funds (ETF), paving the way for the launch of the mainland's first such exchange.

The regulations, published in Wednesday editions of leading state financial dailies, were issued by the China Securities Depository and Clearing Corporation and cover registration, management and clearing of ETF trades. They will take effect immediately.

"The Shanghai 50 ETF will be launched very soon," the *China Securities Journal* reported.

The launch of ETFs in China mark another development for its emerging capital market.

Boston-based State Street Global Advisors, part of State Street Corporation, owns a third of a venture with China Asset Management, or Huaxia, which is launching the Shanghai 50 ETF.

Winnie Pun, a principal at State Street, said this first ETF may grow to at least US \$300 million within 18 months of its launch. The Shanghai 50 ETF could start trading on the Shanghai Stock Exchange in December, Pun said.

An ETF is similar to an index-tracking mutual fund, but it can be traded on the stock exchange like a listed company. (Xinhua)

High-speed Rail to Link Shanghai and Chengdu

By Qiu Jiaoning

A high-speed railway running from east to west across central China is to start construction by the end of this year and will be completed in 2020, China Radio International reported Wednesday.

The new line, between Shanghai and Chengdu, via Nanjing, Hefei, Wuhan and Chongqing, will be a double-track railway allowing speeds of up to 200 kilometers per hour. When completed, the rail link will reduce the current travel time between Shanghai and Chengdu by more than one third, from 35 hours to just ten hours.

New Expressways to Enhance Traffic Flow

By Qiu Jiaoning

Traffic flow is expected to improve in Beijing with the opening of 11 within the coming year, according to a report in Wednesday's *Beijing Times*.

Of the 11, the Jingcheng Expressway is already in operation, easing traffic pressure on Jingshun Road, the Airport Expressway and the surrounding area of the Third Ring Road.

A further six expressways have started construction and the other four are in the preparatory stage.

According to Zhou Zhengyu, deputy director of the Beijing Municipal Communication Committee, there is no difference in the width or grade of expressways and major highways, but there are no traffic lights on expressways, allowing more smooth and rapid traffic flow.

When completed, Beijing's 380-kilometer expressway system, consisting of five ring roads and fifteen expressways, will account for 8 percent of the entire road network, but will bear 70 to 80 percent of the city's traffic flow.

Guidelines to Help Companies Invest Abroad

By Annie Wei

The Ministry of Commerce published a set of guidelines to help Chinese investors do business in the other countries on its website Tuesday.

According to the guidelines, government commercial institutes or Chinese chambers of commerce in other countries should send a report to the ministry on problems they confront relating to trade barriers and to contract and labor disputes. Chinese companies in other countries are also encouraged to submit such reports.

The Ministry of Commerce says no confidential information from the reports would be leaked, but that key issues would be highlighted to help investors avoid risk and work out problems.

The ministry will raise reported issues with the relevant authorities in those countries. For problems related to investment or service trade barriers, the ministry will organize an investigation.

A ministry official was quoted in the Beijing Times Monday as saying there were more and more barriers hampering Chinese investment abroad, and that the new guidelines would help Chinese investors better negotiate such problems as they arose.

New Regulations on Imported Cars

By Annie Wei

China's imported car market will undergo a major shake-up in 2005. A Ministry of Commerce official told Xinhua last Friday that in order to fulfill commitments made on entering the World Trade Organization, China would cancel quotas on imported autos by January 1, and that import licenses for cars and parts would expire at the same time.

Su Hui, vice section chief of Tianjin Port Free Trade Zone customs office was quoted in *China Business News* Monday as saying that canceling the licenses would not impact on the domestic car market in the short term as popu-

lar makes like Mercedes-Benz and BMW are manufactured in China; but things might change after June 1, 2006, when automobile customs tax is cut to 25 percent and multinational car producers are allowed to set up their own sales and service outlets in China.

However a source from the Ministry of Commerce was quoted in the same article as saying that a new system will take the place of the quota license for imported autos.

Deng Yu, marketing director of AEC, an automobile mall in Guangzhou said in the *Business News* article that the new system required the distributor to receive

a distribution license from the car producer, and then register with the Ministry of Commerce the brands and quantity of autos it planned to import. The relevant government authority would then decide whether to grant the distributor the import right according to its business scale and ability.

Zhu Yucheng, marketing director of Debao car sales company, which has been licensed by BMW, said that many multinational car producers had already re-confirmed their distributors in China, and had submitted import plans for next year to the Ministry of Commerce.

Peugeot Makes Waves with Retroactive Rebates

By Deng Minjie

Dongfeng Peugeot, a joint venture carmaker based in Hubei Province, has drawn a great deal of attention since it announced the prices of its 307 series cars would be cut by up to 20,000 yuan as of Monday.

While price cuts are standard in China's competitive auto industry, what makes the move the first of its kind is Peugeot's decision to give equivalent cash rebates to customers who purchased cars

since August.

"The price cuts and rebates by Dongfeng Peugeot are a sign the company is taking action in advance of market trends. We are working to be proactive, not reactive, when facing market challenges," Hu Yue, sales manager at a Beijing Dongfeng Peugeot dealership, told *Beijing Today* on Monday.

The carmaker announced the rebates would be distributed between December 1 and 31.

After years of tremendous

growth, sales in China's car market have slowed considerably this year.

The Chinese media has reported that some of Peugeot's competitors have disparaged the rebates as an advertising ploy, not an improvement of customer service.

Employees from local Toyota and Shanghai Volkswagen dealerships declined to comment on the development when contacted by *Beijing Today* this week.

"I personally don't think this

is a promotional activity," Wang Dongchuan, an expert from the Society of Automobile Engineers of China, said. "They probably made this decision in response to the recent downturn of the domestic auto market."

Fan Huan, a senior manager at *Auto Fun* magazine, concurred and said price cuts and retroactive rebates were inevitable trends in China's market as it fell in line with standard practices of the international auto industry.



Despite the recent downturn of China's auto market, international carmakers clamored to participate in the Guangzhou International Auto Fair held in Guangdong Province from November 22 to 29.

Photo by Imaginechina

Government Green Lights First Bank Fund Manager

By Sun Yongjian

A source from the Industrial and Commercial Bank of China (ICBC), one of the big four state-owned commercial banks, on Tuesday confirmed the bank has received approval from the China Banking Regulatory Commission (CBRC) to set up the country's first bank fund management company.

The bank insider, who requested anonymity, told *Beijing Today* the company would be set up by the end of the year with 100 million yuan in initial registered capital.

The name of the company, to be wholly owned by ICBC subsidiary Industrial and Commercial Financial Co., would be China Industrial and Commercial International Fund Administration Co., he said.

"After getting the go-ahead from the State Council and the CBRC, the bank is awaiting final approval from the national securities watchdog, the China Securities Regulatory Commission."

Another member of the "big four", the Bank of China, would be entrusted to administer the company's funds as a third party, the

Economics Survey newspaper reported on Saturday.

All of China's major state-owned banks and China Merchant Bank are reportedly preparing to set up similar fund management companies.

"This is a key step towards multi-functional banking, which used to be forbidden in China," Yu Xiaoyi, a researcher at GF Securities told the *Economics Survey*.

"It is very significant that commercial banks can acquire new channels for capital placement after setting up fund management companies."

Konica Minolta Building Branches in China

By Sun Yongjian

Japan's Konica Minolta Holdings Inc., one of the world's leading makers of optical instruments, announced plans to establish a new subsidiary in the Chinese mainland in 2005 on its website on Tuesday.

The new branch, a holding company based in Shanghai called Konica Minolta (China) Co., would be wholly-owned by Konica Minolta and start with \$35 million in capital, the Web site statement said.

Its main areas of business would be information research, brand promotion and assistance and support of other Konica Minolta Group companies in the China market.

New manufacturing company Konica Minolta Business Technologies (Wuxi) Co. would be established in Jiangsu Province, under the holding company's umbrella, to meet expanding demand for digital devices and laser printers, the company announced.

The China market has become a focal point for Konica Minolta's development and 30 percent of the company's brand promotion budget goes to China, the Beijing-based *First Financial Daily* newspaper said on Monday.

Merchants Bank Launches Assets Management Accounts

By Pan Hao

China Merchants Bank launched this country's first consumer assets management accounts, dubbed fortune accounts, or Caifu, in Beijing last Thursday.

The Internet-based services would be limited to the Beijing market for the time being and gradually extended to other regions of China after March 2005, said a statement on the bank's Web site.

The innovative accounts al-

low customers to access the bank's network through coded USB devices, not bank cards or books, the bank said.

Customers can use the accounts to conveniently handle loan and bill payments, fund transfers and other transactions.

The accounts also connect directly to the stock, foreign currency and other investment markets, allowing customers to personally manage their money and investments.

Domestic Company Purchases Brazilian Forest

By Pan Hao

After purchasing the rights to 15,000 hectares of forest in Brazil this April, Chinese firm Shanghai Anxin Flooring Co. recently secured ownership of another 85,000 hectares of forests near the Amazon with the help of China's Ministry of Commerce.

Chen Hong, head of Anxin's planning department, told *Beijing Today* on Tuesday that under conditions of the purchase, high-tech systems like global positioning

(GPS) would be used to ensure the sustainable use of forest resources.

The deal would enable the company to introduce high-quality hardwood flooring products in the domestic market, said a company source.

Anxin, the largest solid wood manufacturer and sawn timber importer in China, operates two manufacturing facilities in Shanghai and Curitiba, Brazil and was the first domestic company to buy forest tracts in Brazil.

Amway Resumes Franchising

By Sun Yongjian

Amway, a US-based manufacturer and direct sales marketer of daily-use commodities, resumed sales of franchise rights on November 10, around six months after it halted such activity, Jiang Jingyuan, senior media affairs manager at Amway China told *Beijing Today* on Wednesday.

"But this has no connection to legislation covering direct sales now being drafted in China," Jiang said.

In China, where the government has banned direct sales schemes, Amway used a "shops plus employed salesmen" pattern, he added.

Amway made the decision to resume franchising after increasing its investment in China, adding production lines and expanding its sales staff in the past half year, he said.

Standards for franchising rights would be the same as used before the company imposed the moratorium this April, he said.

Chinese media and market analysts have speculated this year that the government may be preparing to reverse its stance on direct sales and allow direct sales companies to recruit large sales staffs and pay them salaries in line with their sales performance.

Economist Questions Role of Heavy Industry

By Qiu Jiaoning

In an article put out on the Web site of the State Council's Development Research Center, famed Chinese economist Wu Jinglian warns that continuing to put heavy industry at the lead of economic growth could put China in a precarious situation and create an energy crisis, the *Beijing Morning News* reported Tuesday.

Wu's opinions have extra resonance this year considering the government's efforts to reign in overheating economic sectors caused by excessive investment in

the steel, non-ferrous metals, building materials and other heavy industries.

Emphasizing heavy industry was not an appropriate choice for China's future economic growth, the economist wrote, because it would all but inevitably exacerbate existing shortages of energy supplies in the country that have led China to import almost 100 million tons of oil this year alone. Moreover, heavy industry did not present a long term solution to China's employment issues, Wu said.

HK Tycoon Invests \$90Million in Semiconductor Maker

By Sun Yongjian

Shanghai-based Grace Semiconductor Manufacturing Corp. announced on Tuesday that it has entered definitive investment agreements with Cheung Kong (Holdings) and Hutchison Whampoa, Hong Kong-based enterprises under the umbrella of tycoon Li Ka Shing, for the purchase of a total of \$90 million in shares.

"Given their investment experience in the Chinese telecommunications and in-

formation technology sectors, their expectation that Grace will become one of China's leading semiconductor foundries represents a substantial endorsement of the farsighted nature of our business strategies," Grace President Dong Yeshun was quoted as saying in a statement on the company's homepage.

Dong said the capital injection would propel Grace towards becoming a profitable public company.

Executive Shake-up Follows Jianlibao Buy

By Sun Yongjian

Just days after famed Chinese soft drink maker Jianlibao was purchased by two Beijing companies last Wednesday, a new president and chairman of the board have taken the helm at the struggling company, the *Beijing Times* reported on Wednesday.

Li Zhida, chairman of the board of Huizhong Tianheng

Investment Co., now Jianlibao's majority shareholder, had assumed the general manager post and Jiang Li of Northern Hengtai Science and Technology Co. was named its new chairman, the newspaper said.

Former Jianlibao board members including Zhang Hai, Zhu Weisha and Ye Honghan were not on the revised list of company executives, it said.

First Sino-Korean Life Insurer Launched

By Annie Wei

South Korea's Samsung Life Insurance Co. has received approval from the China Insurance Regulatory Commission to set up a joint venture company with China National Aviation Holding Company (CN Air Holding), the *China Business News* said Wednesday.

Samsung Life and CN Air Holding would hold equal 50 shares in the firm, to be established in Beijing with 200 million in registered capital, the report said.

The joint venture would hopefully be set up in the first half of 2005, a representative surnamed Yan from the Beijing office of Samsung Life told *Beijing Today*.

South Korean insurers were lining up to enter China's insurance market when it opened to foreign investment on December 11 in keeping with China's World Trade Organization entry commitments, the *China Business News* said.

Korea Life Insurance, LG Insurance Co. and Hyundai Marine & Fire Insurance had already set up offices in Beijing and were waiting for the lifting of restrictions only allowing companies with over \$5 billion in assets to get business licenses, it said.

MSN To Open Portal in China Next Month

By Annie Wei

MSN's new Chinese-language portal will begin operation in China next month, the *Beijing Morning Post* said Tuesday.

The portal would offer six main areas of content, community, auctions, pictures, mobile phone ring tones, cars and friends and games, it said.

Information presented on the portal would be provided from domestic portals like Taobao.com, Ourgame.com.cn and Englishtown, which stand to get many new users through access to MSN's popular Messenger services, it said. Access to that potentially lucrative customer base, however, comes at the steep price of 20 million yuan per company.

Because China will not start granting licenses to provide Internet content to foreign companies for another two years, MSN has no right to generate information on its own.

MSN's entry should only ratchet up already intense competition between leading domestic portals and put them in danger of never producing the profits to show returns on high initial investments, experts told the *Beijing Morning Post*.

Bush Signs Debt Increase into Law

Washington, November 19 (Reuters) – President Bush Friday signed into law a measure authorizing an \$800 billion increase in the credit limit of the US, the White House said.

On Thursday, the Republican-controlled House voted 208-204 to pass the bill. Senate approval came on Wednesday.

Democrats said the debt limit increase, the third in as many years, was necessitated by Bush's "irresponsible" fiscal priorities, including what House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi of California described as tax cuts for the wealthy and corporate handouts.

Republicans say the 2001 recession and the costs of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan as well as the aftermath of the September 11 attacks are responsible for the fiscal shortfall.

Blunt Greenspan Says Deficit Unsustainable

November 19, (FT.com) – Alan Greenspan, chairman of the Federal Reserve, did not mince his words when talking about the US current account deficit at a banking conference in Frankfurt Friday.

The US current account deficit, he said, was unsustainable. "Net claims against residents of the United States cannot continue to increase forever in international portfolios at their recent pace."

Greenspan has spoken before about the fact that a decline in the "home bias" among worldwide investors has allowed the US to run a current deficit rising

above 5.5 per cent of gross domestic product, far higher than was sustainable in the past.

Strong economic performance and in particular a surge in productivity growth has attracted funds to the US, providing the almost \$2bn of capital needed per day to plug the gap between domestic savings and investment.

Analyst's Take:

It is on grounds of stimulating economic growth and developing capital circulation that Bush decided to increase the credit limit of the United States by \$800 billion. Although the GDP data of the US has always presented increasing momentum, it is still hurt by unemployment. We can also see a slowdown in the economic growth of the US with the effect of the tax cuts' gradual

weakening since 2004.

To ensure impetus behind economic growth, the Bush government advocates carrying out continuous tax cuts and further enlarging the budget deficit. As a result, it is imperative to increase the national debt limit.

If successfully the US maintain its economic growth, the increased budget deficits will not constitute a threat. But the exchange rate of the US dollar will slump further if budget deficits continue to increase.

Continuous increase in national debt will cause a drop in bond prices and a rise in the earning rate while the recent price of long-term bonds makes no obvious change, showing a strong tendency to rise of the US bond market.

Greenspan is trying to describe that in the long term, this is an unsustainable external deficit. But nobody can guarantee foreign investors will continue to fund the deficit forever. Speculating on the current situation, the severe financial crises will hardly turn around and it is necessary for the US to increase its national debt this time.

– **Wang Lei, analyst of the Global Research Division, Global Markets Department at Bank of China** (Qiu Jiaoning)

Protect Women

On the eve of "The International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women", hundreds of Spanish Wednesday gathered in front of Sevilla Council Hall, in memory of those women victims killed in 2004.

Xinhua Photo



African Leaders Gather Tuesday to Assess NEPAD Development Program

Algiers, November 21 (AFP) – African leaders are to gather in Algiers on Tuesday to review the progress of the New Partnership for African Development (NEPAD), a wide-ranging strategy for ensuring good governance and building the economies of the world's poorest continent.

Launched with great fanfare in 2001, NEPAD aims to lift the continent out of poverty by attracting investment to end dependence on aid, but the project's initiators have begun to show impatience at a lack of tangible results.

Last month Senegalese President Abdoulaye Wade fumed that so far nothing had been achieved in key sectors, such as agriculture and infrastructure, and that "We are spending too much money, wasting too much time in talk shops."

One of NEPAD's key achievements so far has been the launching of a unique peer review system that allows countries to name and shame states on the continent that fail to live

up to a set of agreed principles of good governance.

Thus far, some two dozen countries have come forward to sign up to the Peer Review Mechanism (PRM) and the first assessment reports are due to be published next year.

Analyst's Take:

NEPAD is a vision and strategic framework that was mainly set up on the basis of political security and economic cooperation.

It may be true that NEPAD has achieved not as much as people had expected during the last three years. But this plan could not develop fast and smoothly for two reasons. One is the limitations of the leadership of some African governments. Another is the lack of a sense of participation on this issue.

There was still something to please members as 24 countries signed up to the PRM. This was founded to supervise government of each member in order to keep efficiency among projects including telecom and water conservancy in sub-regional areas.

NEPAD's CEO Wiseman Nkukhlu predicts investment in African agriculture will hopefully rise 10 percent in the next five years while NEPAD goes smoothly.

– **Professor Yang Lihua, Institute of West Asian and African Studies, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences** (Deng Minjie)

German Companies to Quit USA

Frankfurt, November 20 (The New York Times) – Add another entry to the list of how Americans and Europeans are parting ways. Several German companies, who rushed to list their shares in the US during the bull market of the late 1990s, are now seriously thinking about abandoning the market.

The Germans are disenchanted by the United States as a source of capital, and offended by what they view as oppressive new regulations adopted in the wake of Enron and other corporate scandals.

"They feel they can raise money just as cheaply outside the US," said Alastair Ross Goobey, chairman of the International Corporate Governance Network. "Why would you expose yourself to much greater regulation and much more personal risk when you don't have to?"

Until now, public discontent has been limited to little-known companies like Lion Bioscience and SGL Carbon. But last week, German newspapers reported that Siemens was considering whether to delist its shares from the New York Stock Exchange.

The trouble, the Germans have

discovered, is that getting out of the United States is as daunting as getting in. The US Securities and Exchange Commission imposes strict rules before it will "deregister" any publicly listed company, thus freeing it from disclosure requirements.

Analyst's Take:

It's only natural for a foreign company to give up its listing status on the US stock market when it is aware that the shares it issued are not pursued by local investors in the US market and it must pay a much higher cost on the overseas market.

Any company is granted a right to choose its market. The US stock market is very different from the European market in accounting systems and information revealing systems after the Sarbanes-Oxley Act of 2002, which generated heavy legal costs and made executives more accountable for the accuracy of financial statements.

In fact, in some foreign countries, some high performing companies are not willing to be listed because the stock markets are not ideal channels for fund placement and when listed, the financial condition and other matters can't be kept private. They also don't want to share the dividend with shareholders.

– **Shi Hongfeng, analyst from Minzu Securities** (Sun Yongjian)

Barroso Opposes Major Revision of European Union Budget Pact

Brussels, November 24 (AFP) – New European Commission head Jose Manuel Barroso reiterated that he opposes fundamental changes to the Stability and Growth Pact, which embodies the budget rules underpinning the euro.

"We don't think it would contribute to the credibility of the pact to have a fundamental revision," he told reporters, in his first press conference since taking over as head of the new EU executive this week.

He was reacting to a call made by Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi Tues-

day to the EU's current Dutch presidency that the bloc should renegotiate the parameters of the EU's Maastricht Treaty concerning public deficits.

Barroso stressed that the EU's new constitution, signed last month in Rome, reaffirmed the validity of the stability pact. "Respect for the key rules of the Stability and Growth Pact is written into the constitution," he said.

But he said he was ready to work with EU member states to "ensure the necessary flexibility" in interpreting the pact's rules "while respecting its main principles."

General Electric to Purchase Ionics in \$1.1Billion Deal, Plus Debt

Wilton, Conn. November 24 (AP) – General Electric Co. said Wednesday it has agreed to acquire Ionics Inc. in an all cash deal valued at about \$1.1 billion, plus the assumption of debt.

GE will pay \$44 a share for Ionics, which supplies water-treatment and water-purification systems to consumer, industrial, municipal, and utility customers. The acquisition price represents a nearly 48 percent premium over Ionics' Tuesday closing price of \$29.75.

GE said the merger is subject to the approval of the holders of at least two-thirds of Ionics outstanding common shares, and that cer-

tain Ionics holders, representing about 20 percent of the outstanding shares, have agreed to vote their shares in favor of the transaction.

The transaction is expected to close in the first half of 2005.

Ionics will be merged with GE Infrastructure, which includes the company's water and process treatment operations. The division's president and CEO, Bill Woodburn, said, "The combination of Ionics' technology, project experience, and services network with GE's operating and project finance expertise will accelerate the development of technology solutions for the global water purification segment."

Europe Closer to Formally Adopting Uniform Accounting Standards

Aris, November 21 (The New York Times) – The European Commission has formally adopted an emasculated accounting standard for derivatives, leaving it up to banks to decide whether they will fully comply with international rules aimed at preventing financial institutions from hiding losses.

The vote on Friday was a victory for banks, mostly but not all from France. They had opposed the accounting rule, voicing concerns that it would lead to volatility in reported profits and balance sheet values.

Even with the decision to change the rule, the European Union moved closer to a system of having all companies follow similar accounting standards beginning in 2005. Until now, each country has had its own rules, which have varied both in details and in how well they were enforced. Many companies are expected to report significant changes in profits under the rules.

The derivatives rule, known as International Accounting Standard 39, is similar to, but less restrictive than, an American rule that has been in force for several years.

For First Time since 1950s, America to End Being Net Exporter of Food

Washington, November 22 (AFP) – The United States, which prides itself on being the breadbasket of the world, will see its agricultural exports drop 10 percent next year and, for the first time since the late 1950s, will cease to be a net exporter of food, according to a government projection.

The forecast, released by the Department of Agriculture, said overseas sales of US agricultural products were expected to slide to 56 billion dollars in fiscal 2005, down from 62.3 billion the previous year, due to depressed world prices for grains, oilseeds and cotton, "and

increased foreign competition."

Meanwhile, food imports, boosted to strong consumer demand, were projected to grow by 3.3 billion dollars and reach a total of 56 billion, balancing off the agricultural portfolio.

"Expected US agricultural trade hovers between a surplus and a deficit, as it last did in the late 1950s," economists Carol Whitton and Ernest Carter wrote in the report.

Slumping prices and aggressive challenges from top competitors were affecting practically all leading US farm products, including wheat, corn and rice.

Watch Your Language, Ladies

Virginia, November 23 (USA Today) – Linda Hamburger is no wallflower, and she was working at a Florida utility company when the "F" bomb escaped her mouth in a moment of frustration.

It would not have been a big deal if it had come from a man, but Hamburger says it got her fired for insubordination.

It may be unfair and a double standard, but high-ranking women say careers can be damaged by saying "the hell with it," or other words that seem tame coming from men. Women near the top say that their advice is to ignore off-color language from male executives and reserve indignation for when it counts: salary and promotion disparities.

Women especially need to watch phrases with a sexual undercurrent, says executive coach Debra Benton and author of Executive Charisma and How to Think Like a CEO.

Benton says she has done extensive interviews with almost 100 male CEOs over five years. She asks them what are the intangible things holding qualified women back. Many say the women make the mistake of trying to fit in with a male vocabulary. But when coming from a woman, certain words steer male minds away from the message and give them something to chortle about among themselves. It has the same effect as if a woman wore a low-cut dress to a meeting, Benton says.

Elderly, Disabled Get a Lift

By Wang Fang

Beijing's public transportation stepped up accessibility last Tuesday when the city's first elderly- and disabled-friendly bus started plying the streets, *Beijing Youth Daily* reported.

The new bus covers a 12-kilometer, 15-stop route from Xizhimen to Beijing Railway Station and runs between 6:30 am and 8:30 pm.

"The bus is equipped with a computer-run speaker much louder than the ones on ordinary buses, an electronic screen that shows stop names and other information like weather reports and a sign written in big, bright orange characters on its front," the bus' ticket seller was quoted as saying.

"All the equipment is there to help disabled and elderly people hear or see stop names."

A woman in a wheelchair, surnamed Li, was waiting for the bus when it arrived at a station near Fuxingmen. The driver pulled up close to the sidewalk, opened the bus' special middle door and switched on an electric air pump that made the bus lean closer to the pavement. The conductor then got out and helped push Ms. Li onto the bus.

While the bus' first run was a success, the system had rough spots that need to be ironed out before the vehicles were truly accessible to everyone, the *Beijing Youth Daily* article noted. The city's uneven streets presented one serious problem, as the bus's ground clearance was only 36 centimeters, meaning it was likely to take a pounding going over potholes or speed bumps, the driver said.



Ms. Li thanks the bus conductor after being helped in the door.

Photo by Yuan Yi

Orphans Feel Spirit of Thanksgiving

By Zhou Ying

Ana Herrera of Spain and some friends gave children at the Langfang Orphanage something to be very thankful for on Wednesday when they donated a big television and lots of food to the facility.

Herrera told Beijing Today that she and her husband began doing charity work in China after she first came the country in 1999 to study for 15 months.

"We held a charity party last Thursday and collected nearly 600,000 yuan in donations, with which we can help many children in need," she said.

Iryna Duelya (left) and Renee Shoot, who have adopted four children from the Langfang Orphanage, participated in the donation activity.



Photo by Li Shuzhuan

Court to Judge Validity of Naxi Music Title

By Dong Nan

The name Naxi ancient music is at the center of a legal battle that opened in a court in Lijiang, Yunnan Province last Wednesday. Plaintiff Xuan Ke, a 75-year-old expert in the supposedly ancient musical form and president of the Dayan Naxi Ancient Music Association, is suing critic Wu Xueyuan and the magazine *Art Criticism* over an article that Xuan claims damaged his reputation.

Xuan filed the suit with the Yunnan Lijiang Intermediate People's Court on March 25 following the publishing of Wu's article "What is Naxi Ancient Music?" in *Arts Criticism's* debut issue last September. Xuan has demanded a public apology as well as 100,000 yuan in compensation from Wu and 1.1 million yuan from the magazine.

In the article, Wu, vice president of China's Traditional Music Association, said the term "Naxi ancient music" did not appear until 1994, when Xuan made it the name of the local Lijiang folk music played by his Dayan Dongjing Ancient Music Association. The critic suggested that what Xuan called Naxi ancient music was actually the title of his group's performances, making it a commercial brand name, not a real musical classification.

Since the start of the controversy, Xuan has issued many public statements declaring Naxi ancient music

was an ancient form inherited, maintained and developed by the Naxi minority people of southwestern China.

The plaintiff told the court that because the magazine was sold both in China and abroad, the controversial article had done significant damage to his reputation, put him under public pressure and led to economic losses.

Wu argued that Chinese academics did not agree about the concept of "Naxi ancient music" and said his intention was not to smear Xuan or the musical form but to address the issue from a musical point of view.

Three other Naxi musicians in their 70s told the court they were angry about the article because it said senior musicians in Xuan's troupe could not play nor read music.

Wu replied that he had written they could not play or read *baishaxiyue*, the most ancient form of music of the Naxi people, not that they could not play or read any music.

The court has not yet announced its judgment.

Xuan and two others established the Dayan Naxi Ancient Music Association in 1987. Since its debut concert in July 1988, the company has performed all over the world and its concerts have become extremely popular among tourists visiting the exotic resort town of Lijiang.



Xuan Ke



Wu Xueyuan

City Tries New Drug Rehab Treatment

By Li Jian

Beijing's first methadone treatment clinic is due to open next Tuesday at the Ankang Hospital in Xiaohongmiao, Xuanwu District.

Methadone treatment, a proven if not always successful way to help heroin addicts break their habits, is one part of new efforts by the city government to prevent HIV/AIDS, a campaign that also includes public distribution of free condoms and clean syringes.

The charge for the methadone program is 10 yuan per dose.

"Our aim is to develop methadone maintenance treatment to reduce sharing of syringes

and thereby prevent the spread of HIV," Wu Zunyou, head of methadone treatment at the China's Center for Disease Control, told the *Beijing News*.

The local clinic will be China's ninth, as similar facilities are already operating in Guangzhou and Yunnan and Sichuan Provinces, areas where needle sharing is fueling the spread of AIDS.

While such treatment programs have sparked some public controversy, most medical experts agree that methadone treatment can reduce the use of addictive illegal drugs like heroin and prevent related problems including crime and disease transmission.

Local Center Runs Movies for Migrants

By Liu Zhaoxi

More than 500 migrant laborers are expected to turn out for the premier of a new movie about people like them at the Chaoyang Cultural Center tonight.

Last Thursday, the theater hosted the first free movie screening meant just for migrant workers, drawing hundreds of local construction workers.

Zhang Jiajie, a center employee, told *Beijing Today* the theater was planning to hold regular free shows for migrant workers and even arrange for on-site movie screenings at distant work locations.

"We call on other theaters in Beijing to open special free movie shows for migrant workers, say, once a month," Zhang said.

The center's move was intended to entertain the city's

many migrant workers, most of whom cannot afford normal movie tickets, she said.

Tonight will also see the start of the city's first movie projection lessons for migrants, one-month classes intended to teach practical skills and support the drive to bring movies to work sites around the municipality.



Nearly 500 migrants turned out for last Thursday's first free film screening.

Photo by Qian Bingge

Black Boxes Found From Baotou Plane Crash

By Liu Zhaoxi

The two black boxes from the plane that crashed in Baotou, Inner Mongolia on Sunday, killing 55 people, were recovered Wednesday and should help investigators determine the cause of the accident, the Xinhua news agency reported that day.

Sabotage was already ruled out as a cause of the crash, China Daily said on Monday.

The Shanghai-bound China Eastern CRJ-200 plane, which belonged to a subsidiary of the airline in Yunnan Province, plunged into a frozen lake in Baotou's Nanhai Park Sunday at around 8:20 am, shortly after taking off from the city's airport. All 47 passengers and six crew members on board died, as did two people on the ground.

One of the deceased passengers was from Indonesia and several were officials from the Baotou city government, Xinhua said.

Witnesses said the plane broke into flaming fragments, which caused damage to a house standing beside the park. One local man told Xinhua that the plane seemed to hang in the air for a few seconds before it dropped into the lake and exploded.



A diver surfaces with the second two box.

Xinhua Photo

On Monday, the General Administration of Civil Aviation of China (CAAC) decided to temporarily ground all the nearly 20 CRJ aircraft in domestic fleets for inspections, Xinhua said. Some of the planes were back in service by Thursday.

The CRJ-200 is a 50-seat commercial jet aircraft assembled in Quebec, Canada by Bombardier Aerospace, according to Bombardier's website.

Insurance compensation of victims' families was already underway and payments were expected to total 11 million yuan, *Beijing Youth Daily* said on Wednesday.

The bodies of all 55 victims were recovered by Wednesday.

Mine Fire Death Toll Rises to 65

By Wang Fang

Of the at least 116 miners trapped by a fire that swept through five iron mines in Shahe, Hebei Province on Saturday, 51 were pulled to safety by the time rescue work was completed and 65 perished, Xinhua news agency reported Wednesday.

Preliminary investigations indicated that the fire was caused by sparks from an electrical cable in one mine and quickly spread to the four connected shafts, clogging the mines in flames and heavy smoke, the report said.

Hu Chuxing, spokesman for the rescue team, told *Beijing Youth Daily* that poor management at the mines made it difficult to accurately determine the number of miners below ground when the fire broke out.

The majority of the dead, most of whom died of smoke inhalation and asphyxiation, were either locals or came from poor parts of Guizhou and Shaanxi provinces.

The five mines employed at least 200 child laborers, the *Hebei Workers Newspaper* said. Among them was a 16-year-old boy surnamed Zhou from Shaanxi Province, who told China Daily that he worked at least 16 hours a day in a 200-meter-deep mine for 800 yuan a month.

Another miner, surnamed Wang, told the *Hebei Workers Newspaper* that many of the dead had been sent into the mine to rescue their coworkers.

"When the fire broke out, the boss of the mine forced my husband and my brother to go down into the mine to rescue the men trapped inside, but did not provide them with face masks," said Yan Changgui, whose husband and brother both died in the fire.

City government officials are working to handle the situation and insurance companies have begun extending compensation to the families of policy-holding victims.



Many of the victims were ordered to run into the burning mines to save their coworkers.

Driving Student Accidentally Runs Over Trainer

By Wang Fang

A woman enrolled in a driving course made a fatal mistake last Saturday when she stepped on the accelerator instead of the brake pedal of a training truck and accidentally ran over her instructor, killing him instantly, the *Beijing Messenger* reported.

Witness Mr. Wang said the accident at the Yuma Training School in Shunyi District occurred around noon when the woman was practicing reversing the truck.

"The trainer got out of the truck and told her to put it in reverse, but she must have put the truck in first gear. He then asked her to stop when the truck was a few meters away from the school's wall," Wang told the newspaper.

"The trainer ran after the truck and soon he was in front of it. Suddenly, the truck lurched forward and crushed the trainer against the wall. She must have stepped on the gas, not the

brake."

The collision smashed the truck's front end and windshield and the student inside was so shocked she could not get out of the vehicle for several minutes, he said.

The driving instructor was taken to Shunyi Hospital and pronounced dead at 5 pm.

Sources from the Yuma school told *Beijing Today* the accident was under investigation and would not disclose any details other than that the trainer, a Shunyi resident, was 30 years old and surnamed Li. They refused to give the driving student's name.

Lin Fang, a lawyer with the Zhonghe Law Office, said compensation for Li's death would depend on the results of the police's ongoing investigation, adding both the school and the student would be responsible for paying compensation according to Chinese law.

By Liu Zhaoxi

After years of renting, increasing numbers of foreigners are purchasing homes in Beijing, making overseas residents an attractive new market for local developers.

A research report from international real estate consulting firm DTZ Debenham Tie Leung shows that individual foreigners accounted for 1.75 percent of all property pre-sales in the second half of 2003, up from 0.77 percent in the first six months of the year. With increasing investment pouring into Beijing from China and abroad in the run-up to the 2008 Olympics, final figures on foreigners' housing purchases this year, whether for personal residence or investment purposes, all expected to show more dramatic growth.

The Beijing government opened the way to this sales growth in September 2002, when previous distinctions between commercial housing for domestic and foreign buyers were abolished. Before that move, foreigners were only allowed to buy properties built by foreign developers.

Other policy changes that have made it easier for foreigners to secure mortgage loans from domestic banks are important factors in the rising sales figures. Sources from the Bank of China and the Industrial and Commercial Bank of China told *Beijing Today* that foreigners can now get mortgages for terms up to 30 years and with the same interest rates offered to Chinese citizens with little more than a valid international ID and local residence permit.

The Bank of China even provides home loans in US or Hong Kong dollars, though their terms are limited to no more than eight years.

Surveys conducted by DTZ Debenham Tie Leung indicate that Chaoyang District, particularly the embassy area and Central Business District, are the most popular locations for property purchases among Beijing's foreign community. The majority choose high-end apartments such as the Seasons Park development at Dongzhimenwai Dajie, Binghe Garden near Chaoyang Park and apartments at China World.

What factors are fueling the pick-up in property purchases by foreigners in Beijing? What kind of impact could this trend have on the local housing market?

Yue Fenggang, program director at DTZ Debenham Tie Leung
The internationalization of Beijing is attracting foreign investment in property

A city's degree of internationalization influences the amount of long-term investment put into the city by foreigners. Beijing is becoming more international and its economy is growing quickly, which is attracting increasing international interest. Although this city still falls short of international standards in aspects like traffic, especially development of subway, light rail and public transportation, and community development, the municipal government has set plans to bring Beijing closer to global norms by 2008. That will attract more foreign companies to open businesses in Beijing and demand for housing will climb. The increase of foreign investment in real estate demonstrates their confidence in Beijing's future.

What impact will foreign investment have on Beijing's real estate market? Foreigners from developed countries can bring to the local market ideas about property standards like individualism and humanism that would be healthy trends for the development of the real estate industry. These ideas will help improve not only property standards, but also their surroundings in terms of commercial development, transportation and more.

Katherine Travers, American student at Foreign Studies University

The appeal of Chinese real estate to foreigners is as a money making scheme.

A real estate agent told my



Foreigners Getting into Local Property Game



Foreigners are buying much more than groceries these days – many are investing in top local properties.

Photos by Li Shuzhuan

father that if he was going to invest in China that now was the time to do it, because Beijing is developing so rapidly and with the economy of China growing and foreign businesses moving in every day, there is going to be a huge market for housing. In places where the city is expanding and new corporations are moving in there is an even larger market. Basically, apartments and houses can be purchased right now relatively cheap. If one were to purchase a property, fix it up, and then rent it out, it would virtually pay for itself. In addition, foreigners are allowed to easily open bank accounts here, which could foreseeably make it much easier to do business and make large purchases in China.

Falk Kagelmacher, German architect working in Beijing
Long-term investment in Beijing is risky

I think it makes sense to buy a flat, for the purpose of living in it and not paying rent. As a long-term investment, meaning, you keep the flat to sell it after some years, I have doubts. Here in the local market, property, which is selling for high prices right now, will decrease in value very fast. After five years, a newly-built project might be worn out. Just look around in Beijing. Many people are buying flats for the purpose of selling them again very fast and earn some quick money. That is OK for individuals, but this practice is generating unnecessarily high prices in the market. So if people buy places to live in it, that is OK, I guess. But keep in mind that a loan from a bank will last at least 20 years. So be sure you buy a flat that will keep its value for 20 years.

Matthew Wilson, British businessman
I feel confident about investing in property in Beijing.

In the short term, I can rent a place to live, but in the long term, I'd like to buy one. I will work here for several years and I feel confident that if I buy a property here that I will make the right decision. I have invested in other properties in other big cities around the world, like Tokyo and Hong Kong, and property, over time, will rise. I think Beijing is important because of the 2008 Olympics. By that time, it should be a hot location, I hope.

Zhang Bin, real estate agent at Beijing Seasons Park
Renting leaves you with nothing.

Many foreigners like to live in the Dongzhimenwai area because there are many foreign embassies and businesses and international schools around, giving it an international atmosphere. Apartments with quiet environments, nice landscaping, luxurious furnishing and complete entertainment facilities are most likely to attract foreigners. Some foreigners buy houses because monthly mortgage payments are the same as rent payments, but renting leaves you with nothing in the end.

Liu Ying, employee at foreign company
It is more comfortable to live in your own place.

My husband is an American Chinese and we bought a home in Beijing because we work here and won't go back to the US in the near future. We feel more comfortable living in our own place than renting one, and we can lease the apartment out when we go back to the US. When we chose a place to buy, what we considered was location, location, location. It had to be a location with convenient access to the subway or light rails, as well as shopping and entertainment venues, and within walking distance of many places.

Annette Riehle-Meister, renting tenant at Seasons Park
I won't buy a home in Beijing

My husband is now working in Beijing and his stay here is open-ended. But we're not going to buy a home by ourselves, because it is too expensive.



Public Divided on Issue of Prenatal Paternity Testing

By Zhou Ying

China's shifting social mores are nowhere more evident than in people's changing views of sex, relationships and marriage, as previously strict rules regarding couples and matrimony are making way for non-traditional relationships and the surging popularity of affairs, one-night stands and people living together before they tie the knot.

While some hail these changes as advances, others see them as threats to establishing real trust between partners. A new topic in this ongoing debate is the recent availability of prenatal paternity testing to prospective parents.

Since the Guangzhou Gynecology Graduate School of the Guangzhou Second People's Hospital became the first institution in China qualified to provide prenatal paternity testing services on June 10, the school has handled more than 300 cases, mostly involving married, intellectual women aged between 25 and 30.

The tests, based on DNA checks of amniotic cells, can be done as early as two weeks after conception and a woman stops menstruating.

The science is reliable, but public opinion towards the tests is heatedly divided. Some say the checks allow people to solve potentially relationship-ending problems before it is too late, while others hold the tests only open the way to casual abortions and sexual promiscuity.

Sun Xiaofang, director of Guangzhou Gynecology Graduate School
This kind of service is a representation of improving human rights.

We have been accredited to do prenatal paternity testing by the Guangzhou Judicial Bureau and we are the only non-government institution allowed to conduct such services for courts.

The improvement of the legal system has made it unreasonable for courts to do their own testing. Moving testing to an outside party ensures the results are fair and rules out any possibility of court interference.

At the same time, the government has not prohibited us from providing the same services to the public. I think as long as there is demand in society, we should be ready to meet that demand.

I think this kind of service is a representation of improving human rights. Obviously, the majority of public paternity cases we handle are results of short affairs. We can provide people with a means of solving potentially serious problems instead of waiting until a baby is actually born.

Ms. Liu, advertising company employee

Women who use such services are just trying to avoid blame for having affairs

I simply cannot accept this kind of paternity testing. The thought that we can test babies before they are born is horrible. I think women who use such services are just trying to avoid blame for having affairs.

In today's society, families are less stable and secure than before. People are becoming more casual about sex, so one night stands and affairs are basically accepted. But some of the people who try such

behavior end up getting pregnant. Of course, these women would be very happy to have a place where they can do such tests and find a way to solve their problems. That is why I am convinced that these services will only support people to have casual sex or extra-marital affairs.

Li Xingmin, professor from International Association of Chinese Medical Specialists and Psychologists

Such behavior is just a way for people to duck responsibility

The rise of such phenomena as unstable marriages, casual sex and single mothers are the main factors behind the public focus on paternity testing. It is clear and beyond question that the new technology behind prenatal paternity testing can give people means to solve some tough problems.

But I would advise public caution about this service before related laws are perfected. Ethically, this kind of testing should be strictly regulated, as should hospitals legally entitled to conduct prenatal paternity testing.

Prenatal DNA testing is often not a good idea because of the high potential for harm to the mother and developing embryo. Because of those risks, the government should rigorously dictate who can and cannot get access to these tests.

In cases when the father of a given embryo is not the one expected, many mothers may choose to have abortions. In my opinion, embryos, which I call 'pre-lives', are alive and therefore casual abortions means the end of those lives. I believe that such behavior is always just a way for people to duck responsibility.

Song Jiangang, lawyer from Shengbang Law Office

We have to look at this from a moral perspective

In China, abortion is a personal matter, not a public matter, and there are no set laws on the issue. So we have to look at this from a moral perspective.

Of course abortion is a highly disputed matter. The dispute revolves around whether an embryo is considered a human being, because this country does not legally define an embryo's right to life.

Xu Anqi, researcher from Chinese Academy of Social Sciences

The main cause of divorce is husbands' baseless doubts of their wives

I personally can't see much reason for people to get involved in paternity testing, but I do know that in most cases it is a result of husbands not trusting their wives. These men's actions, to some extent, damage women's dignity.

Paternity testing cannot solve fundamental problems between couples. Some husbands get tests done on their children to determine paternity, a move that could do psychological damage to children old enough to understand what is going on.

In many cases of divorce that I have studied, the main cause for the split is the husbands' baseless doubts about their wives. Some give their wives fixed times they have to be home. A paternity test is a clear indication that a husband suspects his wife's fidelity, and that kind of doubt can easily destroy a marriage.

By Dong Nan

A research group of the Development Research Center of the State Council on November 20 released its latest report on Chinese company owners and managers' attitudes to the economy.

The group stated that from the beginning of this year, the Chinese economy had experienced a too-rapid growth of investment. The central government curbed the overheating by:

- tightening control over investment and bank loans
- raising the deposit-reserve ratio for financial institutions
- checking on illegal land acquisition and use
- cutting industrial projects which consume energy and resources, but lack economic efficiency.

The survey wanted to know how these measures affected managers. Companies involved covered agriculture, mining, manufacturing, energy supply, construction, transportation and communication, sales and catering, financing and insurance, real estate, service, culture, science and technology research. Among them, 56.6% came from East China (Liangning, Hebei, Beijing, Tianjin, Shandong, Jiangshu, Zhejiang, Fujian, Hainan and Guangdong), 22.4% from central (Shanxi, Inner Mongolia, Heilongjiang, Anhui, Jiangxi, Henan, Hubei and Hunan) and 21% from the west (Shaanxi, Ningxia, Guansu, Yunnan, Guizhou, Sichuan, Chongqing, Guangxi, Xinjiang, Qinghai and Tibet).

18.9% of them are defined as large companies, 47.2% medium size and 33.9% small, based on capital assets.

Levers of the economy

As to the government's handling of the overheated economy, 12.4% thought that government's measures had "significant achieve-

How Bosses Feel about Overheated Chinese Economy

ments" in controlling the overheated economy, 54.9% thought they had "some achievements", 23.9% thought the achievement is not so obvious, and 7.6% thought the achievements were hard to judge yet.

Only 6.2% thought the measures did not affect them. Small enterprises at 7.3% felt more affected than midium (6.1%) and large (4.8%).

According to the survey, 44.2% of those managers thought that the macro-economy was "overheated", 5.5% thought it was "seriously overheated". These numbers were much larger than that of last year (28.2% and 2.5%), and rank the highest since 1998. About one third thought the economy was "normal".

More managers (5.5% for seriously over-heated and 44.2% for over-heated) in the east thought the macro-economy was seriously over-heated or over-heated than managers in Central China (4.6% and 42.5%) and the west (6.0% and 41.4%).

Exactly 54.5% thought the measures made it harder to obtain a loan, 39.9% thought transportation was harder; 36.1% felt there was increasing difficulty with land requisition.

Exactly 31.7% thought that controls shrunk demand and made it harder to plan. There were 24.2% who thought it harder to invest and 20.3% felt official approval was stricter.

Tightening control over investment and bank loans especially hit medium-sized companies (57.9%), companies in West China (60.6%) and private companies (57.1%); 57.3% of those managers said their enterprises lack capital.

There was an obvious transposition and land requisition distinction - enterprises in Central (45.6%) and West (45.3%) China had more difficulties with transposition (East China was 35.8%). East China found it hardest to requisition land (38.2%), Central China (33%) and West China (33%).

Hopes and fears

The state of the company also varied: 42.7% of managers felt their enterprise was in a good state, 45.2% suggested "just so-so" and 12.1% "not so good." Generally, more companies in the east were in a good state (45.9%) than central (39.2%) and west (37.2%). Also the larger the company, the greater the feeling of stability (53.7% for large, 45.3% for medium and 32.6% for small).

As to profits, 54.1% of managers gave positive evaluations ("good", "pretty good" or "very good"). About 47.2% felt profits were lower than normal, 43% normal and 9.1% better than normal.

Looking to the future, 38% thought that orders in the next quarter would increase, 43.6% thought they would stay the

same and 18.4% thought they would decrease. With regard to investment in the company, 55.4% of managers thought it would increase, 28.2% thought it would not change and 16.4% foresaw a decrease.

Thirty percent of managers planned to boost employment, and 50.5% aimed at keeping

Breakdown of participating managers (percentage)		
gender	male	95.9
	female	4.1
post	board chairman	57.1
	general manager or president	59.7
	factory director	13.7
	secretariat of party committee	25.6
	others	2.8

Breakdown of participating enterprises (percentage)		
by industry	agriculture	3.2
	mining	2.5
	manufacturing	59.7
	energy supply	2.9
	construction	6.0
	transportation and communication	4.3
	sales and catering	10.2
	financing and insurance	0.2
	real estate	3.7
	service	2.1
	culture	0.6
	science and technology research	1.0
by area	other	3.6
	east	56.6
	central	22.4
	west	21.0
by scale	large	18.9
	medium	47.2
	small	33.9

the same number. Only 19.5% planned to cut jobs.

Those who decided to boost employment mainly came from eastern areas (32.4%), medium-size companies (31.4%) small companies (30.3%) and private businesses (42.8%). Higher demand for labor in eastern areas will continue to attract migrant peasant workers.

While 50.5% thought a lack of skilled labor was a serious issue, 15.3% complained the problem was "very serious" Only 34.2% thought it was "not so serious." In 2004, 47.3% of those companies increased their employment of skilled workers.

For the next three months, 34.2% of those managers thought the business situation would improve, 56.6% foresaw no change, and 9.2% thought it would worsen.

Major problems

The survey asked company managers to list the problems with the Chinese economy and found that for those managers, the most serious problem was a shortage of energy supplies.

Among all respondents, 41.6% thought the problem "very serious", 44.9% serious, and 13.5% thought it was not serious. Exactly 82% thought the supply of electric power fell short of demand. That number in 2003 was 61.1%. Only 16.5% felt the supply kept pace and 1.5% believed demand exceeded supply. Exact-

ly 63% thought railway transportation fell short of demand. That number in 2003 was 26.6%. Exactly 34% thought it struck the right balance. As to petroleum, 68.5% felt supply of petroleum could not meet demand and 73.3% felt the same about coal. Only steel seems to have improved a little - 26.9% thought supply fell short of demand, while that number was 28.4% last year.

Other problems rated included growing income disparity, with 40.3% feeling the problem was very serious and 45% serious; corruption 37.4% very serious and 48.2% serious, environmental protection 38.1% very serious and 46.4% serious; and finally, the monopolization of some industries 35% very serious and 43.1% serious.

Other problems mentioned included problems of agriculture, rural areas and peasants, shortage of funds, possible financial risks, lack of competitiveness in the international market, unemployment, lack of skilled workers, export trade barriers and a lagging service industry.

Compared to these problems, the overheated economy was not considered a crucial problem - 46.4% thought it not serious, 43.2% thought it serious, and 10.4% thought it very serious. Main participants agreed that insufficient demand and inflation were not serious problems.

Survey information

This anonymous survey was conducted by a research team of the Development Research Center of the State Council, led by Li Lan, Chen Quansheng, Xiong Zhijun, Zheng Jingping and Chen Zhong, and based on 2,881 respondents.

Education of Disabled Children Demands Attention: Survey

By Dong Nan

According to the UN statistics, there are 600 million disabled people in the world. And according to the estimates of the China Disabled Persons' Federation, the number of disabled people in China amounts to 65 million. In other words, there is one disabled person in every 10 in the world. And there are 763,000 disabled children at school age in China.

This month, a research group of China Youth University for Political Sciences released a report on the situation of education among disabled children in China. It pointed out that compared with developed countries, the popularity and quality of education for disabled children in China was not satisfactory. And both of the two major methods - special schools and inclusion at regular schools - suffered many problems.

Situation and comparison

Compared with five years ago, the education of disabled children did improve in some ways. For example, the ratio of school-age disabled children receiving their nine years' compulsory education increased to 77.2 percent from 62.5 percent five years ago. Among them, blind children increased from 23.1 percent to 54.1 percent, deaf children from 51.9 percent to 72.9 percent, and children with special needs from 72.8 percent to 81.9 percent. The total number of disabled children at school reached more than 589,000.

However, compared to developed countries, the general situation is far from satisfactory. The report used Japan as a reference.

- Rates for entrance of compulsory education

According to statistics from the China Disabled Persons' Federation, by the end of 2000, there were 390,611 school-age disabled children who did not attend compulsory education. That represents 22.8 percent of all disabled children. Of those who did not attend, 53.03 percent did not go to school because of poverty.

According to statistics from the Japanese Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science



Equipment in Nanjing Xinfu Special Need School is poor.

Photo by Photocom

and Technology, by the end of 2000, the ratio of Japanese school-age disabled children undergoing compulsory education was 100 percent.

- Rates of entrance to senior middle school

In 2000, China had 24 special senior middle schools (16-18 years old) for disabled children, and recruited 1,809 students. Seven schools catered to 344 blind students and 17 educated 1,465 deaf children. Disabled graduates from junior middle schools numbered about 110,100 from 1998 to 2000. In other words, 1.64 percent of disabled children had the opportunity of receiving a senior middle school education.

In Japan, by the end of 2003, 100 percent of Japanese disabled junior middle school graduates could study at senior middle schools. Among them, 98.3 percent of blind students, 95.9 percent of deaf students and 95.6 percent special needs students went to special senior middle schools. The rest attended regular schools.

- Rates for college education

By the end of 2001, there were 2,166 disabled college students in China. Of them, 585 went to special colleges for disabled people. Every year on average from 1990 to 2001, 250 disabled people attended higher education.

In 2003, Japan, 48.1 percent of blind students, 52.6 percent of deaf students and 1.5 percent of special

needs students went to colleges.

- Teacher-pupil ratio

According to the statistics of the Ministry of Education of China, in 2002, in special education schools, each teacher had 12.57 students to teach.

In 2003, Japan, each teacher in blind schools had 1.14 students, each in deaf schools had 1.37 students and each in special needs had 1.62 students.

- Students number in each class

There is no statistics to show how many students to a class on average in special schools in China. According to the estimation of Lu Deping, leader of the research group and deputy director for the Chinese Academy for Youth Development, China Youth University for Political Sciences, the number was from 10 to 15.

In Japan, averagely, in blind schools, there were 2.91 students in one class, and the number was 3.36 for deaf schools and 3.6 for special needs schools.

Lack of special schools

"There is a serious lack of special schools for disabled children, especially in the West and Central China," said Lu to *Beijing Today*.

In 2000, 183,000 school-age disabled children could not go to school in West China, meaning 47 percent of the total number of disabled children could not go to school. And the number was 135,

000 children and 35 percent in Central China.

On the one hand, it was because of the poverty of families of disabled children. On the other hand, the lack of special schools in these areas made the costs of education that much higher.

According to Lu, in the Hui Autonomous Region of Ningxia, northwest China, there is a total of exactly one special primary school for disabled children. It recruits hundreds of students every year. However, there are tens of thousands in the region.

"The education of disabled children is really a dilemma," said Lu. He said generally that depressed areas tended to have more disabled people because of poor healthcare standards. For example, many children become deaf from the abuse of antibiotics. In urban areas, such tragedies are more likely avoided. Rural areas lack real doctors and medical information.

But the situation in the city is not exactly rosy. According to Lu, Beijing is one of the cities with the most special schools for disabled children - each district has one school for the deaf and one for children with special needs. Some districts have more than one, but every teacher had 9.26 students on average in 2003. This number outperforms the national level of 12.57 students, but Japan averages 1.57 students.

There are problems with

equipment at those special schools. Lu picked Rugao Deaf School in Jiangsu as an example. There, the major teaching method was reading pictures to know words without any modern electric instruments, records, microphones, projectors, TVs or computers. And Jiangsu is a relatively rich province.

Problems of inclusion

From 1993, China adopted a policy to include some disabled children - mainly limb-disabled and slightly mentally disabled - to go to ordinary schools and study with students during the compulsory education period.

Lu characterized this as an effort to assist those disabled children with integration into society. By 2002, 65 percent of disabled students studied at regular schools. Lu's report found that limb-disabled children adapted better. The major problem was the children with special psychological needs.

"He could not follow the class no matter how hard I tried and gave him special training," Lu quoted a teacher's complaint about her student at Qingyu Primary School, Taicang, Jiangsu Province. "And as long as he felt bored in class, he began to make noise and even beat other students. We have nothing we can do about him."

Many teachers of such students report the same dilemma. Eventually, many abandon the effort of imparting knowledge to those students. All they want is prevent those students from "making trouble."

"Most teachers do not have training for teaching special students," said Lu, "and of course they do not know how to deal with the situation. Sometimes there would be some training for them organized by local education bureaus, but they mainly teach ideas, not detailed methods."

"Most teachers have sympathy for those disabled students and tried to be kind to them, but without proper methods, it cannot work," said Lu.

Generally, Lu said, large universities such as Beijing Normal University and Capital Normal University have courses for

teachers of retarded children. But teachers at primary schools mainly graduated from senior middle schools or two-year colleges. This is really a dilemma.

Social problem

"The problem of disabled children education is not only the misfortune of a single family, but a social problem," said Lu, "but many fail to realize that. And I think the government does not pay enough attention to this problem."

He suggested the government not only provide disabled children educational opportunities, but also attach importance to the quality and effect of that education. For example, build more special schools and organize special working groups to supervise the educational situation of students studying in ordinary schools and provide regular assistance to teachers.

Family education should also not be overlooked. According to Lu's report, many families feel their special needs children bring misfortune and shame on the family. They will not let their children go to school and do not seek aid from society. Some parents of disabled children are disabled as well, and cannot provide help to their children on school courses.

"The problem of disabled children's education is really crucial," said Lu. "Without a proper solution, it will add a burden to future society and cause troubles for healthcare, the quality of the population and social security."

Survey information

The survey was conducted by a research group of China Youth University for Political Sciences, led by Lu Deping, and based on statistics released by China Disabled Persons Federation, the Chinese Ministry of Education, Japanese Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Sciences and Technology. Investigators examined special schools for disabled children and regular schools that accept disabled children in four provinces and direct municipalities including Jiangsu, Hebei, Beijing and Shanghai.

“The actual content of hydrogen peroxide in Junen products is at least 43 times the claimed content.”

Calcium Pill Health Scare Sweeps China

By Wang Fang

Beijing Junen New Technology Company, a giant calcium supplement health product manufacturer was exposed by *Henan Shangbao* last Wednesday for using hydrogen peroxide, a substance which causes cancer, in their calcium tablets.

According to the *Henan Shangbao* investigation team, Junen has the largest share of the calcium-reinforcing product

market. Their advertising slogan “Want to have good calcium tablets? Then buy Junen products” is broadcast on almost every TV station every day.

The article created panic among Junen customers. In response, drugstores in Beijing, Shanghai, Zhengzhou and other cities removed the product from their shelves despite the fact the final examination by the Ministry of Public Health was not complete.

In the meantime, Junen held a press conference last Friday in Beijing, telling their customers “the product is not dangerous”. Li Chengfeng, president of Junen, said, “I am 100 percent confident that the test report made by the Ministry of Public Health will prove our product safe.” He also told *Beijing Times* the company was considering bringing *Henan Shangbao* to court for reporting misleading facts.

‘We double-checked everything’ — Henan Shangbao

Henan Shangbao’s article stated an examination carried out by Beijing Agricultural Product Quality Supervision and Test Center on October 21 proved seven out of 11 types of Junen products contained hydrogen peroxide, varying from 1.04 grams per kilogram to 6.28 grams per kilogram.

The article alleged the Hygiene Regulations for Food Additives by the Ministry of Public



“Want to have good calcium tablets? Then buy Junen products.” Or not. Photo by Photocome

Health did not permit the use of hydrogen peroxide in food except for keeping raw dairy food fresh or in packed dried tofu as hydrogen peroxide is carcinogenic.

One of the reporters of the article speaking on CCTV2 revealed how he uncovered the secret of the Junen Company. “On October 13, I received a reader in my office, telling me that Junen calcium products contain hydrogen peroxide.

Health did not permit the use of hydrogen peroxide in food except for keeping raw dairy food fresh or in packed dried tofu as hydrogen peroxide is carcinogenic.

One of the reporters of the article speaking on CCTV2 revealed how he uncovered the secret of the Junen Company. “On October 13, I received a reader in my office, telling me that Junen calcium products contain hydrogen peroxide.

“He said he was once an employee of Junen Henan Branch Company. However, he declined to give his name and telephone number.”

Bai decided to check whether the information provided by the anonymous source was true since Junen is a giant calcium products producer. Bai found that in the Henan market alone, the monthly sales of Junen products was 2 million yuan in 2000. “The truth relates to the benefit of all customers”, Bai told CCTV 2.

Bai said he asked his colleagues in Beijing to buy all 11 types of Junen products and send them to Beijing Agricultural Product Quality Supervision and Test Center. On October 21, the examination report was released, finding that seven types contain hydrogen peroxide. These types included calcium tablets for old people, babies and diabetics.

“Every examiner in the Center signed the report”, Bai told CCTV 2. “We also checked every number before we published it.”

‘Not true, and the article is alarmist talk’ — Junen Company

Junen Company President Li Chengfeng told CCTV 2, “We admit our products do have hydrogen peroxide, but such a small amount does not hurt humans. I take our product every day, as do my wife and my child.”

Zhang Xingyuan, manager of Junen Tianjin Branch Company, demonstrated his product was safe by swallowing six tablets on CCTV 2’s program. “I’ve taken this for eight years,” he said. “You see? Fit as a fiddle.”

A Junen officer in the quality assessment department, who declined to give her name, told *Beijing Today* that the amount of hydrogen peroxide in each 0.8-gram tablet varies from 0.016 milligrams to 0.0192 milligrams. The standard for hydrogen peroxide content used by the Junen Company is less than 500 milligrams per kilogram, she said.

The examination report by Beijing Agricultural Product Quality Supervision and Test Center found that hydrogen peroxide content in Junen products was from 1.04 grams to 6.28 grams per kilogram.

By converting these two sets of data, it can be seen that according to the Junen Company, the hydrogen peroxide content is 20-24 milligrams per kilogram. According to the Center, it is 1,040-6,280 milligrams per kilogram. Thus, the actual content of hydrogen peroxide in Junen products is at least 43 times the claimed content. It is even more than two times the standard set by the Junen Company itself.

But the test result was not accepted by Junen. Zhang Jian, from the public relations department, told *Beijing Today* the Junen Company had no comment about the report made by the Beijing Agricultural Product Quality Supervision and Test Center. “The assessment and examination of the safety and toxicity of the health product was made by the institutions designated by the Ministry of Health. We don’t think this center is a designated one,” he said.

Li Chengfeng and deputy di-

rector of the general office Xie Hua on Saturday explained details about their products and the hydrogen peroxide content via Sina.com, stating Junen calcium products were safe.

“If a person takes four tablets of Junen calcium products,” Li wrote, “according to our standard of at most 0.0192 milligram per tablet, he takes only 0.0768 milligram every day. Such a tiny amount of hydrogen peroxide will be soon resolved into water and oxygen through the hydrogen peroxide enzyme. It will not accumulate in humans’ bodies like lead or other heavy metals.”

Li alleged only when hydrogen peroxide was overused could it hurt the mucous membrane on the intestinal wall. “It is not logical to deduce from that that anything containing hydrogen peroxide is dangerous or poisonous,” Li wrote.

Xie also questioned if the regulations quoted by *Henan Shangbao* are valid for Junen products. “The regulations are for food. But Junen calcium tablets are a health product. It is not appropriate to say Junen products are dangerous by relying on this regulation.”

She said there are no regulations in China which prescribe the correct hydrogen peroxide content in health products.

‘Test report reliable’ — Beijing Agricultural Product Quality Supervision and Test Center

Huang Kunlun, deputy of Beijing Agricultural Product Quality Supervision and Test Center, told CCTV 2 their tests were reliable. “I trust my colleagues working in the center. They are professional examiners.”

Asked if the Center was designated by the Ministry of Public Health, he said “no”. However, he explained that the examination carried out by the center only focused on the physiochemical features of the samples of Junen products. Since it was not a toxicity examination, it does not need a designated institution to carry out this examination. “Apart from that, the methods used by the Center are the same as those used by the Junen Company,” Huang said.

“Especially important to mention is there is no specific standard for babies.”

Current sales in Beijing

The Ministry of Public Health has set up an investigation team to find out if the hydrogen peroxide content in Junen products was toxic. The Ministry official told *Beijing Today* that whenever the final result was determined, they would let the customers know immediately.

The market responded immediately. Although there was no requirement to remove Junen products, it is now hard to find them in drugstores in Beijing. Beijing Tongrentang Drug Store and Jinxiang Drug Store staff told *Beijing Today* they had removed Junen products from the shelves.

Liu Xiulan, an 80-year-old Junen costumer, told *Beijing Today*: “I have taken their tablets for three years. I am really concerned about whether it is poisonous or not.”

The notice in these two stores and their chain stores said that customers who bought Junen products recently could return them with a receipt.

The sales of Junen products in other provinces are similar to that of Beijing. Li Chengfeng admitted sales of his products were declining, but he called on customers and colleagues to be patient and wait for the final result from the Ministry of Public Health, due anytime this week.

Penicillin Shots Cripple Hubei Village Children

By Zhou Ying

Xiang Rui, 9, cannot cross his legs without the help of two hands. He walks uncomfortably towards his grandfather. “The muscles on both sides of his crotch will ache seriously when he runs fast,” the grandfather, who was not named, told *Beijing News* last Tuesday.

“I first noticed the symptoms about four years ago. But I took it for granted that it derived from undernourishment. I took him to the central hospital in May this year, and the doctor diagnosed his illness as fibrosis of the buttock muscles.”

According to the *Chinese Medical Journal*, fibrosis of the buttock muscles is manifested by muscles wasting away and displacement of the hips. A biopsy will reveal marked muscle tissue degeneration and loss of nerve endings.

But Xiang Rui, of Zhongying Village, Hefeng County in Hubei Province, is just one of several hundred child victims in that area. The fact is these children of the village represent just the tip of the needle.

An investigation by the local health bureau found as many as 15 percent of children under 13 years old suffered from the disease in Ashang Village, Shaanxi Province. In Ningyu-an Village, Zhangjiakou City, Hebei Province, there are 700 sufferers. Other high-incidence areas include Hanchuan City, Chongqing, Shandong and Guangzhou provinces.

Trigger

More than 10 children went to Hefeng Central Hospital for examination in May this year. Doctors explained to their parents that the cause of the disease was excess benzyl alcohol present in previous penicillin injections to the buttocks.

Wang Yi, 10, was the first boy to undergo an operation at the hospital on his own expense. Wang Tieliang told *Beijing News* last Tuesday his son was bowlegged and hump-backed as early as 1997. But out of raw poverty he could not take his son to the hospital until the boy could no longer move at all at the end of February this year.

“We took him immediately to Hefeng Central Hospital, and the doctor told me he suffered from fibrosis of the buttock muscles, a disease caused by excess benzyl alcohol.”

He recalled nearly all children in Zhongying Village who catch a cold would go to the hospital in the village to receive a muscle injection. “The nurse would add a little benzyl alcohol to the penicillin injection in order to reduce the pain, but who could expect such consequences?” the father was quoted as saying.

Wang Yi’s operation on March 1 cost the family 4,000 yuan. Dozens of families immediately followed suit with their children. According to *Beijing News*, experts from the Health Department of Hubei Province, Peking Union Medical College Hospital and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in Hubei Province arrived in Zhongying Village on August 24 to investigate. The investigation revealed of the 85 children checked, 75 cases of injectional buttock muscle contracture were diagnosed, mainly in young people aged 4-16 years old.

Repeated buttock injection injuries and an extreme toxic reaction with muscle inflammation are the first steps towards this terrible tissue syndrome. Loss of bodily control over a key white protein involved in skin, tendon, bone and other connective tissue formation is recognized as the main cause of the disease.

The expert team then released a report, saying that the nurse in the local hospital had been using benzyl alcohol as the solvent in a penicillin injection before 1999. “Some children even received the buttock injections when they were only a few

...the day when the experts departed, many parents fell on their knees imploring them to continue performing operations on their children.’

months old,” said the report.

Tian Zhengmao, director of the Hefeng Public Health Bureau, told *Beijing News* last Monday that according to a bureau investigation of the county, 311 children suffered the disease in Zhongying Village alone.

Who to blame?

Although the report does not name the hospital, all the sufferers and parents know it is the central hospital in Zhongying Village, the only place that all the local children had injections.

According to a *Beijing News* report last Tuesday, views diverge between the hospital and



A Zhongying Village child struggles to walk.

parents on the actual dosage of benzyl alcohol.

Bu Xianqing, a senior doctor at the hospital, told *Beijing News* he only mixed two milliliters of benzyl alcohol into a 50-milliliter penicillin injection, which cannot be called too much. As to the disease, the doctor explained it was because of repeated injections, not the medicine itself.

Yang Chunxi, father of a sick boy, argued he, along with several other parents, witnessed the dosage of benzyl alcohol was as much as half of the penicillin. But both sides failed to provide conclusive evidence either way. The hospital did not keep records.

Hospital President Liu Heping held the hospital unanswerable. “Actually we stopped using benzyl alcohol in 1999 when the Health Department of Hubei Province imposed a ban on the use of benzyl alcohol as a kind of solvent. Therefore, we were not restricted by any law on this issue until 1999.”

An anonymous official from the Beijing Drug Administration last Tuesday revealed to *The Mirror*, a Beijing-based evening newspaper, that there was no regulation until now forbidding the use of benzyl alcohol. Hospitals are entitled to choose whether or not to use it. Thus it is not a violation of the law.

Moreover, *Chongqing Economic Times* reported last Friday that the health bureau in Chongqing announced emergency measures last Thursday, saying benzyl al-

cohol was not allowed to be used as a penicillin solvent anymore.

Measures taken

After the investigation, an expert team from Hubei Province spent four days from October 13 performing surgery.

One of the parents Zhou Qianhai told *Beijing News* last Monday that the day when the experts departed, many parents fell on their knees imploring them to continue performing operations on their children.

“They said at that moment we could bring our children to the Hefeng Central Hospital to do the operations. However, we were totally rejected in the name of a shortage of beds.”

Luo Ming, deputy head of Hefeng County, told *The Mirror* last Thursday that the first 83 children who underwent the operation are now in recovery. “Now the government has decided to spend more than 900,000 yuan assisting the children, and the remaining near-200 children can have operations by the end of April next year.”

Zhao Li, an expert of orthopedics from Xijing Hospital, Xi’an city, told *Beijing Today* on Monday it was concluded that a clear diagnosis combined with exercises could curb the damage.

He said nearly all the big hospitals stopped using these injections after 2000. “As far as I know, only some small hospitals in the county are unaware of the results of usage of benzyl alcohol. But I am sure that as the local economy develops, they will improve treatment.”

Russian Pines for Romantic Ending

By Annie Wei

Her guide points to a window on the third floor of the student dormitory building in Beijing Foreign Studies University. "That's it," says Yin Songling, in Russian. Upon hearing these two simple words, Valeriya Nemurova, 64, walks directly to the pine tree under the window and pulls a sprig off a branch. She clutches the sprig and smells it hard. Water fills her clear blue eyes.

Through eight long years of love letters, Nemurova and Zeng Fansong dreamed of meeting and marrying. Then came the collapse of Sino-Soviet relations.

Now, 40 years later, the former Soviet Union resident has flown here to pay her respects to her one true love.

Yin and wife Sun Shixun called *Beijing Youth Daily* after reading the April 21, 2004 story of a Russian foreign expert in Beijing who was trying to help a friend back home locate her long-lost true love: a Sichuanese who had once studied Russian in Beijing.

"We knew the guy in the picture," explains Yin. Yin told the newspaper the man was their college classmate Zeng Fansong. But Sun also revealed that village schoolteacher Zeng had died on January 14, 1968, according to a *Beijing Youth Daily* article on Saturday. It was also not known if Zeng's wife was alive or dead.

They had heard the news of Zeng's death through another classmate, who also died later. Nor did the classmates know what happened to the couple's children. Zeng had also had two brothers in Sichuan, according to Yin, but they had no means of contacting them.

Yunnan media picked up the article in *Beijing Youth Daily* and found Zeng's tomb located in the Erhai Lake region near Dali in Yunnan province. They sent photos.

Through Gu Yijing, deputy section chief of Human Resources at Beijing Institute of Aerodynamics, where the expert works, the institute offered to sponsor a week's visit by Nemurova to China. "Most of us were touched by the story too," says Gu.

Six of Zeng's college classmates meet Nemurova in Beijing Foreign Studies University on a sunny winter morning. The classmates, who had heard stories of Nemurova from Zeng for many years, had wondered how she might look as none had ever seen any photo.

Nemurova stands out from all around in her bright yellow jacket. Her hair is blonde and her lips are thin. Her eyes are deep blue.

The greetings are warm. Everyone is excited. Li Yingnan, dean of the Russian College of Beijing Foreign Studies University, also attends. Quite by chance, it is realized Li's mother had taught Zeng Russian language here in Beijing 40 years ago.

Nemurova greets Zeng's classmates by reciting her own Russian poetry. "Valeriya is a very nice person, and very considerate," says Gu Yijing, who helped organize the trip. "But I feel she is very sensitive too. Although she's a retired dentist, really she's maybe more of an amateur poet."

"All my poems are about



Valeriya Nemurova holds the photo of her beloved, who died in 1968.

romance," admits Nemurova in her native Russian language, through an interpreter Niu Jiangrong. "It comes from years of letters with Zeng."

She holds out a stack of letters and some black-and-white photos. And what a stack: eight years!

Nemurova has made notes of the year on every envelope. Zeng usually wrote 10-12 pages on featherweight paper. Each piece has been pasted on thick card by Nemurova. "They are precious," she says "and must not be damaged."

She shows the classmates two tickets to dinner parties at the Beijing Russian Language College and a ticket to the school cinema. It was never torn.

"Although we could not go to cinema together, to us, the movie never ends as long as the ticket is not torn."

Zeng was bright, says Yin Songling. "There were very few college students 40 years ago. Every time we old folks from the same class get together, we talk about him. He was a leading student in the class, nice and easygoing."

As brilliant students in school, Zeng and his two classmates Yin and Liu Dengrui were dubbed "the three musketeers". One of their articles on student life and how to study the Russian language was published in a Russian newspaper. Novosibirsk resident Nemurova read one by Zeng and liked it very much.

At that time, the Chinese and Soviet governments were promoting cultural exchange between the two countries. Both governments during the 1950s encouraged young people to communicate and become penpals.

"That's how they started," says Yin. "After writing letters to each other for a couple of months, Zeng sent



Valeriya Nemurova and Yin Songling.



Valeriya Nemurova displays a cherished love letter from Zeng Fansong.

City friends assist woman
in quest for poetic meaning



A poem to her dead love written this year by Valeriya Nemurova.

Photos by Lou Qiyong

his favorite photo to Valeriya. As I remember, Valeriya returned Zeng hers. It was a photo of a typical Russian girl, short-hair, young and full of youthful spirit."

After graduation in 1958, Yin moved to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Liu went into aerodynamics. But Zeng made up his mind to teach Russian language at a middle school in rural Yunnan Province. "Zeng was from a poor Sichuan peasant family, and he volunteered to work in the rural areas after graduation."

It was difficult not to admire Zeng's idealism, his old classmates all agreed. But Yin also recalled dark clouds looming.

"I remember some letters from him very clearly. He was puzzled about what he should do as at that time China's relationship with the former USSR had started worsening.

"We urged him not to write to Valeriya anymore, but he said he and Valeriya were deeply in love, they could not leave each other and that he would go to see her even he had to walk from Yunnan to Russia."

In a fairy tale, they would both live happily ever after. In real life... "We heard finally he got married and had kids," says Yin. "But we believed he could never, ever forget Valeriya and he would definitely have gone to Russia for her, but for the unique situation of those times. The bond between them was so strong and universally admired."

Nemurova hoped to meet Zeng's wife and children, but nobody could find any means of contacting the family. With the *Suburban Night of Moscow* music playing in the background, Nemurova tells *Beijing Today* the story of one of the saddest moments of her life.

"When I heard my Russian friend had returned from China,

I called him immediately and my first question was 'Have you found him? Is he alive?'

"But my friend said it was a long story and he wanted to talk with me face to face instead of telling me the truth at once. When I finally knew it, the tears fell out of me."

She says she sat up all night clutching Zeng's photos.

"Poems became the best way for me to express my sadness and feelings."

Zeng once wrote to her mother in 1962 saying he wanted to come to Novosibirsk. "He said he was in love with me and wanted to marry me. I remember my mum was very happy about that letter and very supportive of our relationship."

After 1964, Nemurova did not receive any more mail.

"I thought he must have new love, maybe he has already married or has had kids," says Nemurova. "And I started my own family later."

"When I turned 64, I knew my only wish was to know whether Zeng was doing fine and whether he could still remember me or not."

Zeng died more than 36 years ago, and yet the memory lives on.

"I feel so lucky to have the chance of visiting China and to meet his friends through the help of so many nice Chinese people," says Nemurova. She was scheduled to fly back by Wednesday this week.

"My life is fine. I have two daughters, two grandsons and two granddaughters," Nemurova says.

Says Yin, "She had two marriages. Her relationship with her husband back home is quite cold."

"I will tell the story to my grandchildren when they grow up," says Nemurova. "I want them to know that true love will always be treasured, and stays in your heart forever."

By Hester Xu / Yan Zhang

In the last fifty years, Beijing has changed almost beyond recognition, however few locals seem to understand the significance of many of these changes. In 1993, Wang Jun, a reporter from Xinhua, became interested in Liang Sicheng, an architect involved in the urban planning of Beijing in the 1950's, who attempted to preserve the ancient city.

Over a period of ten years, Wang interviewed more than fifty people, sifted through historical records, visiting the remains of ancient buildings in several cities and researched issues relating to urban planning, real estate development and protection of historical relics, seeking to unlock the history of modern Beijing. His book, *A City Record* was published in October 2003 and was immediately hailed as a major achievement in the field.

A great capital

While examining all the changes Beijing experienced during the last century and their causes, Wang's book also leaves enough space to recount the history of the Chinese capital.

Beijing owes its existence to the expansion of the Jurchen Tartar Jin dynasty during the late twelfth and thirteenth centuries, which built Nandu (southern capital), then Zhongdu (Central Capital) on the site of a small town southwest of the modern site of Beijing. In 1264, the Yuan Dynasty, having conquered most of Asia and eastern Europe, rebuilt the city northeast of the old Jin capital, naming it Dadu (Great Capital). In Marco Polo's *The Travels of Marco Polo*, the capital city of the Yuan Dynasty is described as being as magnificent and spectacular as the mighty Mongolian empire Genghis Khan and his ancestors had created: "This new city is of a form perfectly square, and twenty four miles in extent, each of its sides being neither more nor less than six miles. The whole plan of the city was regularly laid out by line, and the streets in general are consequently so straight, that when a person ascends the wall over one of the gates, and looks right forward, he can see the gate opposite to him on the other side of the city. In the public streets there are, on each side, booths and shops of every description ... In this manner the whole interior of the city is disposed in squares, so as to resemble a chessboard, and planned out with a degree of precision and beauty impossible to describe."

Although there is some dispute as to the authenticity of Marco Polo's record, his description of Dadu corresponds to the basic principles laid out in the ancient Chinese classic *The Observations of Construction Principles from The Rules of Zhou*, upon which the city was based. It introduces a natural lake into the city with an axis-based road network, embodying the true ideals of both Confucianism and Taoism.

During the next 700 years, although the city of Beijing was subject to rebuilding and expansion with the change of dynasties, the basic chessboard layout survived. *Siheyuan* and *hutong*, the Chinese style courtyards and those small and straight streets running gracefully between them also became a permanent feature of Beijing.

In 1368, Beijing temporarily lost its status as capital to Nanjing (Southern Capital) after the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644) drove out the Mongolians and Dadu was renamed Beiping (Pacified North). In 1420, Yongle, the third Ming emperor returned the capital to Beijing, renaming it Beijing (Northern Capital) to show his determination to repel invasion from the north. Although most buildings of the Yuan imperial court were pulled down, Ming Dynasty Beijing was overlaid on the Yuan foundation.

In response to constant attacks by Mongol cavalry, a lower southern extension to the city wall was built in 1504, eventually enclosing the commercial district, the important ceremonial sites of the Temple of Heaven and Alter of Agriculture and a broad swath of countryside. Unlike the city wall of Dadu, which was made entirely of earthworks,



Dongjiao Minxiang, 1954. One of the many pailou demolished to make way Beijing traffic.

City Record



A City Record



Wang Jun

the new wall was clad in brick.

Beijing remained largely unchanged for the next four hundred years. 1644 saw the arrival of yet another invading force, the Manchu, whose Qing dynasty (1644-1911) transferred its capital from Manchuria to Beijing, absorbing China into its own empire. Chinese were expelled from the northern section of the city, which became the home of Manchu military and courtiers. The southern section became the Han quarter of Beijing, where business and all kinds of entertainment thrived.

The Qing dynasty's downfall was brought about in 1911 by revolutionary forces inspired by Dr. Sun Yet-sun, whose Kuomintang party immediately proclaimed the Republic of China. The capital again moved to Nanjing, and Beijing reverted to Beiping, until 1949, when the People's Republic of China was founded.

Tale of a new city

In December 1949, the fate of Beijing saw a new twist. Liang Sicheng and Charles Chen (Chen Zhanxiang), two architects and experts on urban planning, were invited to join Soviet experts in a meeting held by the municipal government to create a new vision for Beijing. The Russian design held dominance when the concept of a large industrial center first

emerged in a report submitted by a panel of the Soviet experts, whose other advice included the construction of administration buildings around an enlarged Tian'anmen Square and the broadening of main streets. Much surprised by this one-sided opinion, Liang and Chen worked together to put forward an alternative proposal.

On February 1952, their famous *Suggestions Concerning the Location of the Central Government Administration Center*, later known as the Liang-Chen Plan was released. The joint report marks out Sanlihe, an area west of the city for the new administration center in order to preserve the entire ancient city as a whole. From 1954 to 1955, most of the *pailou* (decorative archways) on the main streets were dismantled to facilitate traffic, Liang was severely criticised for being "conservative and impractical," and the Liang-Chen Plan was shelved. Between 1957 and 1958, despite continuing debate on Liang Sicheng's idea to preserve the whole city as a "museum," the plan put forward by the Russians was approved by the municipal government. Acclaiming the capital as a "new base for modern industry and center for science and technology," it put forward plans to rebuild and expand the city by renovating old houses, constructing modern buildings and factories, building ring roads, broadening existing roads, knocking down the city walls and rebuilding and enlarging Tian'anmen Square as the new centre of the capital.

1958 not only marked the beginning of The Great Leap Forward, but also saw the launch of an ambitious project to build 10 landmark buildings to mark the tenth anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic. Among the ten buildings, six were to be built in the city center: The Great Hall of the People, the Museum of Revolutionary History and China History Museum, the Museum of National Culture, the Minzu Hotel, Beijing Railway Station and the Overseas Chinese Hotel.

The seemingly impossible task of building the Great Hall of the People was completed in just ten months. Probably the most imposing construction built during this period, the magnificent building convincingly blends the structure of the classic Greek temple with traditional Chinese decoration of glazed tiles and stone carvings.

In the spring of 1964, a new phase of construction was again on the horizon. In a few years, several major north-south and east-west roads were extended and broadened. Chang'an Avenue, Beijing's central axis, was rebuilt to bisect the whole city from east to west and broadened to over 140

metres at the widest part. Seven years after its submission, the initial plan triumphed. Between 1965 and 1969, the city wall was pulled down by construction workers and voluntary residents amid an enthusiastic campaign to build the city's first metro line and a ring road.

In 1973 and 1979, a new proposal was reviewed and discussed by the Beijing Urban Planning Bureau, and in 1983, the Overall Planning for Beijing Urban Construction came into effect, establishing the principle of "gradual rebuilding" to expand the city on the basis of the old layout. Although the plan was revised in 1993, its basic principles were left unchallenged.

Some development comes with high prices. Unable to accommodate the burgeoning population, old hutongs and courtyard houses have to make way for new roads and residential areas. By the end of the 1980s, just 3,900 remained of the over 7,000 hutongs that existed in 1949. These have been disappearing at a rate of 600 annually in the past few years.

In June 2000, the Beijing municipal government decided to invest 330 million yuan in the following three years to refurbish ancient buildings. In November, the government earmarked an additional 25 places for historical and cultural protection, a total area equivalent to 17 percent of the total area of the ancient Ming and Qing city. Together with areas already designated by organisations for cultural relics protection and districts restricted for constructions, only 37 percent of the ancient city is guaranteed protection. The rest has to be redeveloped into new roads, residential districts and commercial areas. By the end of the twentieth century, the city area had expanded nearly five-fold and the population quadrupled.

No loss, no gain

The municipal government has to face the challenge of balancing the protection of cultural relics with vital development. However a new way of thinking might have evolved with a proposal for two alternative buffer zones protecting the surroundings of the Forbidden City were formulated in October 2004.

Over the course of the second half of the twentieth century, much has been lost and much more has been gained. On the evening of October 10, when the anniversary of Sino-French rapprochement was celebrated in front of the Zhengyang Gate in honour of the visiting French president Jacques Chirac, no one could miss the positive note that the spirit of a new Beijing was again on the rise.

(《城记》—A City Record is published by Sanlian Publishing House)

Sparkling Treasures Shine in Imperial City

By Li Ruifen

While Chinese athletes were competing and winning medals at the Athens Olympics, an exhibition of cultural relics, the Beijing Cultural Relics Exhibition was unveiled in the Greece National Art Gallery in Athens. The five-month exhibition attracted more than 160,000 viewers, including the Queen of England and the royal family of Holland. This exhibition is now on show at the art Gallery of the Millennium Monument, until December 7.

Art of bronze

Bronze wares constitute an important part of ancient Chinese culture. Making and using of bronze wares not only marked a critical turning point in human history, but also represented power and social order in ancient China. Carrying abundant historical and artistic information, bronze ware, especially of the Shang and Zhou dynasties, are world famous for their grand form, simple design, and precious inscriptions.

The bronze wares on show are mostly national treasures. They seem to possess a charm that leads viewers back to the mysterious Shang (18-12 BC) and Zhou (12-8 BC) Dynasties, and the origins of Chinese civilization. Among the dozens of exhibits, there are wine vessels like *zun*, *jue*, food vessels like *ding*, *dou*, drinking vessels like *pan*, *lei*, as well as musical instruments.

The three-goat wine vessel (*sanyanglei*), unearthed from Shang Dynasty tombs near Beijing, is a wine utensil from the Shang Dynasty. The eye-catching part of this vessel is the three goat heads decorating the neck. The patterns on the vessel's body are elaborate and intricate, embodying the consummate skills of the ancient artisans. *Sanyanglei* is one of the most precious exhibits on show, not only because of its age, but also because it is one of the few treasures offering textual evidence of Beijing's status as a capital some 3050 years ago.

A colored glaze censer with three-color-dragon and phoenix design (1206-1368), is a pottery piece made in the Yuan Dynasty collected by the Beijing Capital Museum. Despite its age, it still has a bright and vivid color. On the upper part, a dragon is flying in multicolored clouds with its head pointing upwards. The lower body of the vessel is carved with a dragon and a phoenix.

A wine vessel decorated with animal face patterns is one of the oldest treasures on show, and is a representative piece from the Zhou Dynasty. The vessel is almost entirely covered by green speckles, but the exquisite patterns can still be clearly seen. Like most of the relics of that period, the patterns were deliberately chosen, mainly animals and plants related to power and status.

Art of embroidery

China is a silk nation and is one of the earliest countries to produce this textile. As early as the new Stone Age, roughly 6,000 to 7,000 years ago, people had mastered the most primitive methods of spinning and weaving. About 5,000 years ago, silk production took shape. Documents from before the Han Dynasty (206 BC – 220 AD) recorded a variety of textiles, which

became even more abundant in the Yuan, Ming and Qing dynasties.

An embroidered ceremonial imperial robe with colorful cloud and dragon patterns made of bright yellow satin, was worn by Emperor Yongzheng (1403-1424) of the Qing Dynasty. Even though no longer bright in color, the royal robe still radiates an imperial stateliness.

Gold and silver ornaments

The techniques behind Chinese traditional gold and silver wares is world renowned for its maturity and exquisiteness. Gold and silver were symbols of status and wealth. As a special technique, the creation and ownership of gold and silver wares was closely connected to upper-class fashion and taste, and mirrored the demand of the royal family and aristocrats.

The gold and silver wares on show are mostly ornaments. Shining under the glass covers, each piece



Enamel porcelain vase, Qing Dynasty



Pottery incense burner, Yuan Dynasty

Photos by Bao Wei

seems to tell a story, depicting the luxury and extravagance of the old royal families. However, behind the brilliant mask of the ornaments, we can also appreciate the rich imaginations and creativity of the craftsmen who created these masterpieces with their own hands.

Painting and calligraphy

Like silent poetry and soundless music, the artistic world created on paper not only reflects the pursuit of beauty, but more importantly, it incarnates the profound national essence accumulated over thousands of years.

Appreciating the masterpieces of the former scholars and celebrities in Chinese history is not only an enjoyment, but also a way of reviewing history. Sun Di's painting *Lotus Flowers and Water Birds* unfolds a beautiful park scene of the Ming Dynasty, and Yuan Jiang's *Summer Holiday in Lishan* depicts a famous summer resort of the Qing Dynasty. These masterpieces create a great contrast between the extravagant royal air and the moderate artistic conceptions.

What's New

By Tom Spearman
CD

The Libertines, The Libertines



The latest British band trailing hype as the saviours of rock and roll have arrived on Beijing's album shelves. Devotion to the Libertines among their fanatical followers has become all the more agonizing since they've pretty much fallen apart since the release of this, their self-titled second album. And the critics have duly been fawning over it, *NME* describing it as "some of the most exhilarating and brilliant rock 'n' roll of the past 20 years." It's tempting to assume that this is all a pile of the usual, but slip it on and just listen to the opening track, *Can't Stand Me Now*. It's an amazing song for two reasons: one, it's plain brilliant; two, it's a painfully ironic prophecy of lead singer and celebrity crack addict Pete Doherty's ejection from the band. Euphoric and achingly sad at the same time, it's perhaps the best single of 2004. The other standout tracks are similarly narcissistic but it's impossible to resist this album's charm.

DVD

Pickup On South Street



Mere propaganda to some, a film noir classic to others: one thing it's easier to agree on is that this is Richard Widmark's best role. Director Samuel Fuller is clearly in no doubt that the communists are beyond the pale in this story of honor among shady underworld types who are lovable by comparison with the red menace. But it's the superbly played, compromised lead characters that make the film so memorable. As the FBI appeal to jaded pickpocket Skip McKoy (Widmark) to help them find a secret microfilm wanted by spies, he sneers, "Is there a law now that I gotta listen to lectures?" Loyalty to the flag is clearly the least of motivations for Widmark's character. The interesting question is which is the most important in deciding his actions: fear of another jail term, or loyalty to his friends.

Angels in America



It would be easy to be put off by the critical din surrounding this TV miniseries adaptation of Tony Kushner's play. First, there are all the awards, both for the original play and for this version of it, and the critical plaudits of the performances from Al Pacino and Meryl Streep. It all suggests this is something you have to see, like it or not. Second, the issues explored – scathing attitudes in Reagan America to AIDS and homosexuality – are heavy, and depressingly familiar. More importantly though, this is a superbly told story of love, betrayal and secrets. There are a few wearisome clichés, but the writing is both hilarious and moving, and the performances add a depth to the characters that reaches beyond the politics.



Nothing Deep about Throat

By Gareth George

Beijing's North Theatre has played host to a selection of the British Art's Council's leading light's in the last few weeks. *Throat*, a one man show featuring Jean-Paul Zaccarini – for which he was nominated for *Stage* magazine's best actor award – is a curiously pleasing montage of dance, circus skills and ham humor. With apparently scant regard for his own safety, Zaccarini combines startling aerial acrobatics and graceful movements while goofily throwing himself around the stage.

A kind of slapstick melodrama, *Throat* takes the form of an absurdist crash through a nightmarish world of modern relationships. Where it succeeds is that Zaccarini never allows it to become mawkish or, worse, pretentious.

Like a child who's just downed a bag of sugar, Zaccarini dives into a balletic spiraling waltz with a wine bottle; next minute, he's using a large pat of dough as a puppet. He mimes suicides, flirts with the audience – with himself, even. But *Throat* never forgets to inject humor from the leftfield – 'I knead you', Zaccarini tells his dough baby – and the emphasis is firmly on self deprecation and interaction with the



audience. The star is to be praised for not trying to shoe horn in some 'crying on the inside' footnote.

With just an hour's running time, there was never going to be much danger of the audience dozing off, but credit must go to the protagonist for this. Always moving, always switching scenes, relationships to Zaccarini may be scary, suffocating, obsessive, liberating, but they're certainly never dull.

The most impressive scenes involve the aerial stunts. Zaccarini follows a knowingly self conscious song and dance routine by hurtling up a rope, then falling down it. It isn't easy to tell whether this is intended to symbolize the fragile ego of the conman, or is just another rakish flourish from a natural show off, but who cares? It's funny.

Later, Zaccarini floats away from the stage in a suspended stirrup. Reaching to the heavens, he slips, then appears to be swimming. Moments later, he is curled up like a fetus, then hanging by his head, looking for all the world like he might fall.

He ends, appropriately after such a display of physicality, on his knees. A watery, fumbling narcissus – obsessed by his reflection one moment, then sliding like bambi on ice the next.

As the star himself signs off, there's nothing deep about it. But as a showcase for contemporary dance, *Throat* could well open many people's eyes. Dance with humor? Dance with wit? Dance that's entertaining? Whatever next!



Photo by Tian Yufeng



Photo by Geng Lei

Toe-tapping Irish Jig

By Pan Hao

Irish music and its unique step dance will always make your toes tap, and if the music is not enough, the huge sound, the colorful costumes and spectacular lighting and stage effects of *Lord of the Dance* will carry you away to a fairy tale world. The Irish dance extravaganza was staged from last Thursday to Sunday at the Beijing Exhibition Theater.

In 1996, Michael Flatley left the hugely successful *Riverdance* to create *Lord of the Dance*, one of the most popular touring dance productions in history. The story is of the basic good-verses-evil, good-triumphs-over-evil type, based on Irish folklore, but the story is of secondary importance here. The emphasis is all on dance. And while some might complain

that there is a little too much Hollywood in evidence, it is still unmistakably Irish in its form and nature.

With an average age of 22, the performers, led by Damien Doherty, Leigh Ann, Hauren Stapleton and Brendan McCarron, danced with infectious energy. The show began with the title theme *Lord of the Dance*, a classic Irish tune played by a woman in a golden sparkling costume, and then the dancers took over. The muscular style of the male dancers, their uncompromising precision and lighting speed immediately swept the audience away. A dramatic change in the lighting signaled the arrival of the bad guy, but this in no way slowed the momentum.

Traditional Celtic tap dancing is performed with the arms held straight

by the side, with the upper body remaining stiff. All the work is done from the waist downward. In *Lord of the Dance*, however, Flatley introduces a little variation on this rather rigid theme, by permitting a degree of arm movement, but the traditional rhythm and patterns are retained.

Music is the essential component of the show. Celtic music uses a major blues scale similar to that of Chinese traditional dance. It is mostly played in 6/8 time, or at least in groups of three. Two violinist joined the dancers on the stage, giving an added beauty to those killer Irish tunes, and compensating somewhat for the lack of a live orchestra.

The soundtrack to *Lord of the Dance* has become a top seller in Australia, Canada, and the UK.

Sasha on Stage

By Sabu Zhang

The internationally acclaimed DJ Sasha, long awaited by fans here, finally hit China last week.

Performing at Tango last Thursday, Sasha proved that his reputation was well founded, keeping the fans dancing all night long. He turned up at around 2 am, by which time the large crowd were already well into the groove, reigniting them with a unique soundscape of progressive house and trance music.

The sound of Sasha's powerful and hypnotic mixes, together with the dazzling light and video show created an intoxicating scene. Everyone, whether they were down on the dance floor or up on one of the platforms that run along either side, seemed totally oblivious to anything but the beat.

During the show, performers from Ibiza, Spain, put on an exotic show that added to the carnival atmosphere. A man covered in feathers hung in the air like a bird, and a woman dressed in a blue costume like Dali's Burning Giraffe performed an enchanting dance on stilts.

Sasha's talent lies in his understanding of melody and momentum, and the way he uses them to tease, taunt and entrance those on the dance floor before unleashing a record that will have people not just leaping up and down but bursting with emotion.

His Beijing appearance was part of a worldwide tour to promote his current CD, *Involver*.



Photo by Sabu

Business Degrees Lose Their Sparkle

By Xie Lixue

About 44,000 people applied for Master of Business Administration (MBA) education in China last year, 11 percent lower than 2002. That number decreased 9 percent this year, according to a survey of the top 20 MBA schools in China released this month by the mainland Chinese magazine *Executive*.

"This is a sharp contrast with the MBA mania of the early 1990s when it was first introduced to China," according to the survey writers.

But it does not mean an MBA is no longer welcome. "Instead, people are now more critical in choosing the right and best schools."



Executive announced the Top 20 MBA schools in China on November 3 in Beijing.

Photo by Ayi

Schools find their own specialties

After a decade of development, each school can claim its own strengths.

Helping students gain proper employment is the focus of the Tsinghua University MBA program.

The MBA program of the School of Management, Fudan University in Shanghai possesses firm connections with financial institutions like Goldman Sachs, Morgan Stanley, Deutsche Bank Group and Industrial Securities, relying on its geographic advantages near the financial center of Shanghai.

Famed visiting lecturers from international business colleges and corporations are the highlights in the School of Business at Sun Yat-Sen University in Guangzhou.

Classic case analysis with essential research theory originating from practical business earns high esteem among the MBA students at the University of International Business and

Economics in Beijing.

Problems in MBA education

Universities offering MBA courses need to cultivate themselves to meet the tastes of company recruiters: strong executive ability, experience in the industry and personal skills.

Getting an MBA does not automatically guarantee being hired as a manager. It is more like a passport to enter a company, Zhang Xinmin told audience at the releasing ceremony on November 3. Zhang is the dean of the School of International Business and Management, University of International Business and Economics in Beijing.

"It's more important for MBA graduates to use what they have learnt in class to solve practical problems rather than strategic analysis." Zhang said.

Wu Deyun, vice president of Chi-

na AUX Group, said: "Several years of work followed by going back to study MBA is more reasonable and welcomed by companies. Because only with practical experience does the know-how studied in school gain value."

"I think personal capabilities are also very important," said Shen Yi, an MBA student from Tsinghua University to *Beijing Today*.

"I am in an internship program now. I find that study only involves me. But at work, it involves me needing to organize my team and coordinate with other departments, which tests my personal skills." Shen recalled.

Increased values

Though facing so many problems, MBA graduates in China can have their salaries and positions raised. This is proved by the survey.

Averagely, an MBA graduate of 2001 was paid 1.5 times higher than before receiving the education, the survey analyzed. The average pay for an MBA graduate from Fudan University was 190,000 yuan, 146,000 yuan for Tsinghua and 131,000 yuan for Beijing.

But the value of MBA is not only embodied in the increased income of graduates, but more importantly, in promoting the development of MBA education in China.

MBA education in North America cultivates 100,000 graduates a year: the total number for China in the last 12 years.

What's more, the educators at home still lack clear knowledge assessment of the relative value of foreign MBA courses.

Top 20 MBA Schools in China 2004

1. School of Economics and Management, Tsinghua University
2. School of Management, Fudan University
3. Guanghua School of Management, Beijing University
4. Aetna School of Management, Shanghai Jiaotong University
5. School of Business, Sun Yat-Sen University
6. School of Business, Renmin University of China
7. School of International Business and Management, University of International Business and Economics
8. The College of Management, Zhejiang University
9. International Business School, Nankai University
10. School of Management, Xiamen University
11. School of Business, Nanjing University
12. School of Management, Huazhong University of Science and Technology
13. MBA School, Dongbei University of Finance and Economics
14. School of Economics and Management, Beijing Jiaotong University
15. The Business School, Sichuan University
16. The School of Management, Xi'an Jiaotong University
17. Business School, University of Science and Technology of China
18. MBA Education Center, Southwestern University of Finance and Economics
19. College of Business Administration, Hunan University
20. School of Economics and Management, Tongji University

Job-hunting Postgrads Target Residency

By Zhang Nan

Postgraduate students aim to earn about 3,000 yuan a month and women from outside Beijing possessing a master's or doctorate degree prize jobs offering a permanent residency card above other kinds of jobs in the city.

These two findings came together at the 2005 Job Fair for postgraduates at the National Agriculture Exhibition Center on Saturday. About 20,000 students attended and 380 companies participated.

Most graduates seek to earn a 3,000-yuan salary, according to hb.xinhuanet.com. the figure is close to the average income of Beijingers, indicating the graduates are becoming more realistic than before when they were seeking salaries over 5,000.

But women graduates from outside the city prized another factor: the opportunity a job provides for permanent residence in Beijing. Two master's degree graduates from China Agricultural University told *Beijing News* that companies able to obtain them a Beijing *hukou* - or green card - are an automatic first choice.

Participants included 30 percent technology companies, 39 percent other types of company, 18 percent schools and universities and 13 percent scientific research institutions.

They offered 8,776 jobs, 16 percent requiring a bachelor's degree, 73 percent a master's degree and 11 percent a doctorate.

City Offers 700 Jobs

By Zhang Nan

The city government is offering 700 positions to Beijing-based university and vocational school graduates next year.

The Organization Department of the CPC Beijing Municipal Committee and the Municipal Bureau of Personnel announced the vacancies last Thursday.

Students can enroll this week for a test at www.hjpta.gov.cn.

Beijing students studying outside the capital can also enrol, but have to wait until February 1 and 2, the only two days available.

All applicants have to obtain examination permission cards from Beijing Personal Testing Authority before the taking the tests, scheduled for December 18 and February 3.

Vocational Schools Want Teachers

By Zhang Nan

More than 20 vocational schools asked candidates to speak standard Mandarin before applying for 200 teaching positions at the job fair held at the Beijing Graduates' Home last Saturday.

The schools include Beijing Railway Electricity School and Beijing Finance and Economics School. Most schools require candidates to have at least a vocational school degree and work experience as an artisan.

Airlines Seek High-flying Applicants

By Xie Lixue

The recruitment fair held in the Beijing Twenty-first Century Hotel gathered 14 domestic airline companies and thousands of prospective airline employees.

China will have to increase its air fleet by 2,100 planes in the coming two decades to meet the strongly increasing market demand, according to a forecast by China Aviation Industry Corporation I, the state enterprise specializing in manufacturing and research in China's aircraft industry.

"Averagely, an airplane needs 20 crew members at least," Wang Xiaosu, vice director of human resources development at the Civil Aviation Administration of China, told *Beijing Youth Daily*. "That means we need 40,000 flight attendants and drivers."

Flight attendants

Although recruitment is for flight crews, women applying for the job of air hostess occupy a large part of the room. Being an air hostess, "the model in the sky", is still an idealized job.

Wang claimed good looks were no longer a standard requirement for hiring flight attendants. Their personal qualities and strong physical constitution determined whether they could become professionals.

After selection by schools and companies, candidates face the most difficult part: internship. "Somewhere between 6-9 months of internship, someone may discover that they no longer suit the position," said Wang. "It is indeed very tough for girls to board a plane and get off it eight times a day. Also an unpredictable situation can happen at any time -- how to handle it and react appropriately requires a good psychological quality."

Many parents and students believe that being a flight attendant is a decent job with a high social reputation and a competitive salary. But the average salary about 7,000 yuan per month after three years is relatively low compared to competition, Wang said.

English required

At the booth of every company, one requirement listed was language proficiency: requiring a College English Test (CET) 4 certificate.

"The first examination for aircraft maintenance is English," said



Two Russian airhostesses are seen in front of the Su-27 jetfighters at the Zhuhai International Air Expo held earlier this month. They attended the airhostess contest organized by the expo, first of its kind around the world.

Though no more distinguished as before and facing a comparatively decreasing income, airhostess is still a tempting job to most of the girls in China.

Photo by Photocom

Xiao Xu, dean of the economy and management department, Civil Aviation College in Guangzhou. "They are not simply physical workers."

"Just thinking about the thick technical manuals written in English. How can they do their work if they don't understand English?"

Market direct training

The increasing demand of the job market attracts many students to subscribe to training courses. On top of the five aviation schools directly under the Civil Aviation Administration of China, more than 30 pri-

vate schools have opened recently. Air China released their latest pilot recruitment plans on November 10, seeking 10 college graduates and 25 from high schools in Beijing. China Southern Airlines wants 90 aircraft maintenance personnel.

The five aviation schools still lead education, using qualified teachers and guaranteeing students gain a strong educational background. Xiao said there are 26 engines, 14 airplanes and some military and civil types of radar for students to use at the school.

Seeking Employment

Female Beijinger, 39, is looking for a job and has a decade's experience in import-export business, human resources management, interpretation and secretarial work. I have a good command of computer skills and am good at English, both writing and speaking.

Mobile: 13611163663

Female Beijinger, 29, majored in accounting with Public Accountant Certification, fluent in English, both writing and speaking, is looking for a full-time job related in finance or part-time job related to English.

Tel: 8347-7009

E-mail: lily948@hotmail.com

Webmasters wanted. Familiarity with the Internet, web page design and music composition software essential. Love of music useful. Contact Mr. Hu at 6333-1671 ext. 8006.

A graduate of information management from Huazhong S&T University in Wuhan, sophisticated in C/C++, VC6.0, VFP, Access, SQL Server, ActiveX and software developing, familiar with Flash, Photoshop, Excel, PP uses. Also familiar with medical English and Latin.

Contact: 82728588,

13622751429

E-mail: waairu@sohu.com, sonx7@163.com

Beijing Fei Wanda is looking for three print designers, two commercial advertising collectors and two secretaries. Contact: 8737-8652 ext.82 or 83. E-mail: kf@fwd863.com

Looking for two engineers in wastewater disposal and treatment. English and Autocad are musts. We'll provide training opportunities once recruited, both at home and abroad.

E-mail: hr@ouyawater.com

Website: www.ouyawater.com

An experienced Singaporean woman, piano teacher, looks to provide lessons at students' homes. Holds a diploma in piano performance and a grade 8 in theory from the ABRSM as well as a bachelor's of architecture. Currently pursuing film composition with Trinity College. Hope to engage people of all ages in music-making. Please e-mail joilesg@yahoo.com.sg or call: 1369 1278574.

A 41-year-old unemployed man is looking for a job asap. I can drive, speak English and am honest and responsible. Contact me at: 1364 1299276 or e-mail wanglijiali@126.com.

Mr. Chen, a Chinese Canadian, graduate from Shanghai Tongji University, proficient in English and German. Worked as a country manager of a Chinese company in the US in 1995 and emigrated to Canada in 1998. Living in Toronto at present and active in business in North America.

Interested in working as an agent for Chinese companies or making arrangements for the establishment of rep offices in Canada and the USA.

Please contact: Guanjun Geoffrey Chen

Tel: 001-905-508-1700 (in Canada), or: 0392-3931163, 3336537 (in China)

(You are welcome to send positions offered and wanted info to: ayi@ynet.com. Beijing Today does not take any responsibility for the accuracy and authenticity of the information published in this column.)

A Beijing-based English newspaper is looking for reporters, freelancers and editors.

Chinese applicants should have university degrees in English or related majors and media experience.

Foreigners from the UK and US with relevant media experience preferred.

Please send your resumes and writing samples to: hr@ynet.com

By Zhao Hongyi

Steven Laurence Raymer, a professor at the School of Journalism of the US' Indiana University held an interesting and fruitful online class in which he invited his students and local Beijing journalists to exchange views on reporters' roles last Wednesday.

Below are excerpts from *Beijing Today's* interview with Professor Raymer on subjects including journalism, Indiana University and his school after the innovative session.

About journalism:

Do you agree journalists in different countries focus on different aspects of news stories? What do Western journalists focus on?

Your question goes to the core of a lot of research into how journalists in difficult countries and cultures see their professional roles. The answer is yes.

My students have looked at a recent study of US and Russian journalists and found, for example, that Russian journalists are far more interested in being seen as opinion leaders and setting the national political agenda than their US counterparts.

Conversely, American journalists believe being an independent watchdog over government – keeping the government honest and free of abuses and corruption – is a critically important role of the news media.

The bottom line is it is difficult to find agreements across cultures and politics on what are the principal roles and responsibilities of journalists.

What qualities should excellent journalists possess?

Skepticism and the ability to think critically. And, of course, our core values also include impartiality, fairness, balance, and independence – especially independence from government!

Our job is not to take sides, but to report as fully, completely and impartially as possible. As I tell my students, if your mother says she loves you, check it out and get a second source. That's what journalists do.

What are the differences in the way journalism is taught in Chinese and American universities?

This is difficult for me to answer because I have only visited Beijing Broadcast University and the School of Journalism at Tsinghua University. At both institutions I was impressed by students' command of English.

But I would remind that technology, while important, should not be overrated. The ability to write, to think critically and skeptically, and to understand what you are seeing or hearing is far more important than the ability to operate a certain set of technologies, like computers or cameras.

Is journalism a popular profession in the US? Do you have any special requirements for accepting international students, such as work experience?

Public relations and advertising seem to be making inroads in traditional journalism education. Perhaps this is because jobs in journalism are so, so, so competitive and not especially well paying. But we are seeing a steady upward trend in enrollment.

To what kinds of workplaces do most of your students go after they graduate?

In the US scheme of employment, students usually go to paid internships before being hired as fulltime employees. That means our students go to newspapers, both large and small, to magazines, to news agencies like AP and Reuters, and to television stations, usually in smaller cities, for a first job.

A number of students will continue their educations, especially in the legal field.

What advice do you have for students in China who want to study journalism in the US?

Learn American English, which is quite different in usage and pronunciation from British English. Read the on-line websites of the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post* and CNN

Teaching American Journalism at Indiana University

What are core values of the media in China and abroad? What are the strengths and shortcomings of Western media?



Indiana University's eight campuses

Courtesy of Indiana University

to understand the format and conventions used in reporting and writing the news – and to gain a better understanding of the independent watchdog or adversarial role the media plays in the American system.

Do you think the US media is independent?

From the point of view of the government, they are, financially and politically.

The problem here is not the government, it is ownership, such as Rudolf Murdock's NewsCorp.

Below are excerpts from another interview with Mr. Trevor Brown, dean of the School of Journalism of Indiana University:

About the school:

What are the advantages of your school?

At the undergraduate level, our school has a strong balance between a broad general education in the arts and humanities, the social sciences and the natural sciences (including mathematics), the journalism major and a second area of concentration (almost a double major).

The journalism major balances a knowledge of history, philosophy, economics, law, ethics of journalism and professional skills.

Students can practice what they learn



in the classroom in a variety of campus media – a daily student newspaper, a yearbook, a television news program and a student-run radio station.

At the graduate level, the school offers a master's degree with two tracks – a professional track and a research/teaching track.

The professional track focuses mainly on preparing students for careers in print media. We also offer PhDs in mass communication.

Notice

Beijing Today will invite Professor Angela Delves, pro-vice chancellor of Southern Cross University of Australia to chat with readers in our Study Abroad Salon.

You are welcome to log onto <http://bjtoday.ynet.com> to chat, or forward your questions to host Ayi at: ayi@ynet.com.
Time: Tuesday, Nov. 30, 1-2 pm

通知

下周二(11月30日)下午1点, “留学聊天室”将邀请到澳大利亚南克鲁斯大学校长Angela Delves女士做客与大家交流。

欢迎大家届时光临我们的网站: <http://bjtoday.ynet.com>, 或者发送问题到主持人阿义的信箱: ayi@ynet.com。

Ask Ayi:

Q: Though many Chinese students want to study in the UK, Australia or New Zealand, I prefer Belgium. Could you give me a basic introduction to its education system?

— sudden

A: Belgium has three levels of higher education: national comprehensive universities, national universities and vocational education colleges.

National comprehensive universities offer a wide range of subjects and normally house five colleges for science, literature, business, medicine and law. These universities are aimed at culti-

vating researchers and highly-trained professionals. Students usually spend five to seven years to complete their studies and graduate with master's or doctoral degrees.

Educations at national universities are based on applied knowledge, meaning their strongest subjects are fields like business, tourism and hotel management. Schooling lasts three to four years, after which students graduate with professional certificates. After students in three-year courses complete their studies, they can enroll in comprehensive universities and get bachelor's degrees in another two years, but they still have to pass entrance exami-

nations. Students in four-year programs can directly enter comprehensive universities after they graduate without taking the exams.

Vocational education colleges are intended to teach professional skills in such things as cooking and hairdressing. Graduates receive professional skill certificates.

Q: My daughter is currently studying in Russia. I want to know what kinds of degrees from Russian universities are accepted in China.

- yoyo_f

A: According to information from the China Center for International Educational Exchange (CCIEE), the re-



How many students are enrolled in your school? How many international students? How many Chinese students?

We have about 700 undergraduate students studying for bachelor's of arts in journalism (BAJ) degrees, about 35 studying for master's degrees and about 15 students studying for PhDs.

Most of our international students are in the graduate programs.

What are the major criteria for international students to be accepted to your school?

In addition to the requirements for all students seeking a graduate degree (a strong undergraduate record, a statement of purpose, three letters of recommendation and GRE scores) international students must demonstrate sufficient command of English to be able to perform in the program.

About Indiana University:

Which of your university's academic courses have the best reputations?

The university is probably most renowned for its School of Music. A significant number of the departments and programs in the College of Arts and Sciences rank in the top 20, some in the top 10, nationally in the US.

The School of Business and the School of Public and Environmental Affairs both rank in the top 10 and so also does the School of Journalism.

What are the advantages of your university?

Indiana University is nationally distinguished in research across the disciplines, with particular strengths in the arts. We have an opera house, many concert halls, an outstanding art museum and a new theater complex.

Our major campus in Bloomington is one of the most beautiful in the country, located in the forested hills of southern Indiana. It is the national center for producing limestone. Most of the buildings in Washington, D.C., for example, are built of Indiana limestone. You can find many buildings in the university with this limestone tradition.

How many campuses does your university have?

We have eight campuses throughout the state of Indiana, namely Bloomington, Purdue University Indianapolis, East, Purdue University Fort Wayne, Kokomo, Northwest, South Bend and Southeast.

How many students does your university have? How many international students? How many Chinese?

For this semester, fall 2004, the campus has 37,821 students. Of these, 3,244 are international students. I don't know how many are Chinese.

How can international students apply to your university? What are average tuition fees and are scholarships available?

International students should apply to:

Office of Admissions, 300 N. Jordan Avenue, Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana 47405 USA.

For details, please visit our Web site at: <http://www.indiana.edu/admissions/>

Ohana Brings Real English Studies Home

By Cathy Lau

Hoping to capitalize on the study-abroad fever sweeping China, the Ohana Learning Foundation opened its first English language training center on Saturday at the Xiyunali Vocational High School, near the Sanlitun embassy area and the Northeast Third Ring Road.

“We hope Ohana will become the first choice for Chinese parents when they choose an English institution to prepare their children for going abroad,” said Cissie Ma, the center's principle.

Ohana Learning's Whiz English interactive DVD teaching program is aimed at English beginners while similar disks offer advanced business English for higher-level students. The educational DVDs cover a broad range of language related to science, social sciences, health and safety, language and the arts.

“Learners who complete the courses will get an idea of life abroad, as all courses in the DVDs are recorded by native US English speakers. For the cartoons, we hire radio announcers to record the programs in order to provide students with examples of very standard pronunciation,” Li Xingdong, director of the Ohana Learning China Program, told *Beijing Today* at the center's opening ceremony.

“Teachers of English as a second language (ESL) and students alike will benefit from the Ohana Learning DVD titles and related content,” said Ohana education supervisor Andrew Crilly. “For educators, the DVD titles will help supplement existing curriculum and instructional programs with contemporary content across a broad range of subject areas and grade levels. Students will find that the video content in the DVD programs brings subject matters to life and the various activities and resources help to create an interactive learning environment that makes the learning process educational and enjoyable.”

But the Ohana way is not based solely on DVDs. The company's new center has hired two foreign language experts as teachers and by the end of the year will offer free courses to participants to prove “Ohana is an affordable way for Chinese learners to access contemporary, non-linear curriculum content and Internet resources,” as Li noted.



Education supervisor Andrew Crilly held Ohana's first class in China last Saturday.
Photo by Ayi

Foreign Exchange Ceiling Raised for Students

By Zhang Nan

In a move that should make financing overseas studies easier to do on the up and up, Chinese students can now carry more foreign currency abroad following the issuing of a new policy by the State Administration of Foreign Exchange (SAFE) last Wednesday.

As of January 1, 2005, SAFE will raise the annual ceiling for funds transportable outside China to the necessary amount for students to cover their tuition fees and living expenses at their chosen universities. Previous policy only allowed Chinese students to take \$20,000 in foreign currency abroad per year to pay for tuition.

Students can change renminbi for up to \$20,000 at appointed banks, but must apply for permission with SAFE before conducting larger currency exchanges. To file such applications, students must be prepared to provide letters of acceptance to university, proof of living expenses, passports, visas and identity cards or permanent residence licenses.

(Edited by Zhang Nan)



Zhang Zhifeng for Ne•Tiger



Luo Zheng for Omnialo



Claire Fung



Ji Wenbo for WHACKO



Tsai Mei Yue

Cross-Cultural Couture

China Fashion Week reveals 2005 spring/summer collections

By Jacqueline Yu

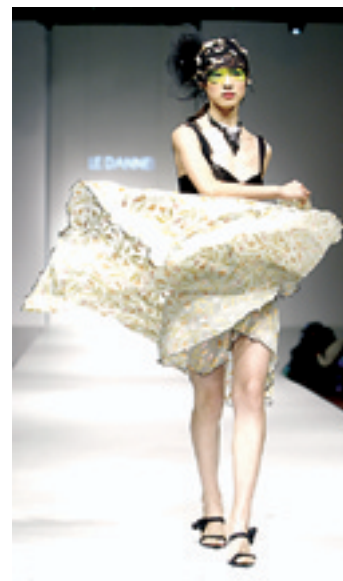
It was a week of couture in this ancient seat of culture with the running of China Fashion Week, highlighting designers' 2005 spring and summer collections, from last Friday through Thursday. The event was split between two venues, the China World Hotel and Beijing Hotel, and led by Chinese supermodels Jiang Peilin and Lv Yan, who trod the catwalk in the newest garments from designers Chinese and foreign.



Liu Yong for U Jeans



Liu Lin for Mogao



Shen Zedan for Le Dannel



Liu Wei for Rose W

Chinese designs – Season of Life

Leopard-skin patters, flowers, rainbow colors, sequins and traditional Chinese elements were common themes in the women's dresses shown by Chinese designers.

Flowers were especially prevalent in the spring and summer collections of Luo Zheng's Omnialo and Shen Zedan's Le Dannel, a natural, organic move to greet the reawakening of nature after Beijing's long winter.

The series of wedding dresses that opened Rose Tsai's collection made

the weeks' smartest use of Chinese elements, as the eight gowns had the fronts of fitted Chinese *qipao* and the backs of Western-style dresses, trains and all. Tsai crowned her brides with towering peacock plumes, harking back to traditional Chinese weddings and referencing female general characters' costumes from Peking Opera.

Designer Luo Zheng played on themes from garments of the Tang Dynasty, putting peony flowers in models' hair and outfitting them in flowing dresses noticeably shorter

than their ancient predecessors. More recent history had clear influence on Shen Zedan's collection for Le Dannel of ball gowns that took style cues from the fashions of swinging Shanghai of the 1920s.

Modern, less formal designs hit the runway in the form of pastel-colored jeans from Liu Yong's U@Jeans brand. Liu Wei's pretty and functional mini-suits may likely appear soon in an office near you, while Ne.Tiger's opening show featured a funky match of a mini-skirt with a pink fur throw.



Marc le Bihan



Richard René



Adam Jones



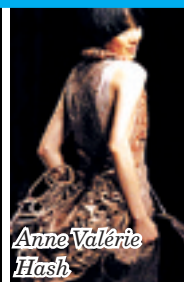
Stéphanie Coudert



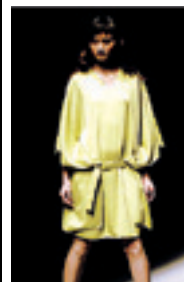
Lutz



Gaspard Yurkievich



Anne Valérie Hash



Felipe Oliveira Baptista



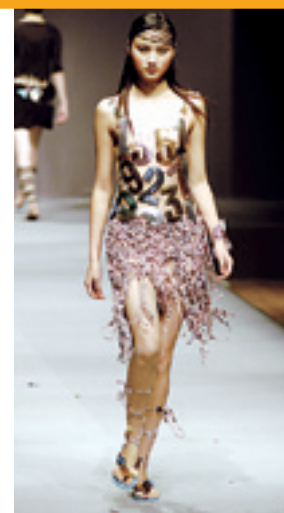
Han Song



Yoshiki Hishinuma



Okamasako



Yoichi Nagasawa

Japan and Korean Collections – Time of Nature

Yoshiki Hishinuma is a designer for ballet, film and stage productions, and his spring collection felt like it was straight from Oz, with light pink flower petals and wavy orange fringes turning up on brightly colored coats and mini-dresses.

Before Okamasako's show began, relaxing music carried over the crowd

as beautiful natural scenes were projected on the main wall. Slowly, out walked the models in long ruffled dresses and tied sandals, looking like they were casually strolling through an alpine morning.

Of the group, Yoichi Nagasawa's show was the boldest, his models striding out in a big group to heavy drumbeats in summer-colored swimsuits and dresses with

intricate materials and exciting ornaments like glittering Arabic numbers.

Han Song's collection continued a recent trend in South Korean ready-to-wear – elegant simplicity. Muted colors like silver and beige and smooth materials kept the clothes simple, clean and comfortable, while innovative shapes showed more of Han's creativity.

Paris Collections in Beijing – Era of Grace

The eight designers from France at Fashion Week came to Chinese as relative strangers to domestic fashionistas, far more aware of top makes like Chanel, but won over crowds with their elegant, romantic and undeniably French designs.

Personal Classifieds

Accommodation

Two bedroom, one living room apartment near Ritan Lu. Home appliances, furnishing available. 62 square meters. 2,500 yuan per month. Contact: Ms. Zhao, 13717871041

Language Exchange

A second-year graduate student of English at Beijing Foreign Studies University, who is quite easy-going and has had abundant contacts with foreign cultures, wants to find a language partner. The person could talk French with me once or twice a week, and in turn I can teach him or her either Chinese or English. Ideally a native French speaker, gender does not matter. Contact: 13691312018, email: gaoanny@hotmail.com

Danny, a 27 year-old guy fluent in English (studied overseas for four years), is looking for female language exchange partner. Contact: dannybao88@163.com, 13717936896

Personal

A single man at the age of 35, good-looking, well educated, working in the financial field wants to find a pretty, well educated woman for marriage. The man is 1.78 meters, 75 kg, likes sports and expects the woman to be no taller than 1.67 meters, aged 27 to 33 and unmarried (Southern Chinese preferred). The man now is living in Fangzhuang in southeast Beijing. Email: m_y_zok@yahoo.com.cn

Professional Help

Anny Gao, a second-year English major at Beijing Foreign Studies University with lots of translation and interpretation experience in financial documents, bidding files, formal government exchanges, seminars and formal business negotiations, workshops and exchanges wants to provide good services to non-Chinese speaking people and can smooth your way in China with an insider's insight and good understanding of your position. Contact: 13691312018, email: gaoanny1@163.com/ gaoanny@hotmail.com

Disclaimer: Beijing Today does not take responsibility for verifying the authenticity of the personal classifieds and thus Beijing Today does not guarantee the accuracy, integrity or quality of the content. All content is the sole responsibility of the advertiser.

Jams

New Orleans to Tokyo

New Get Lucky brings together New Orleans jazz guitarist Richard Bennett and Tokyo jazz guitarist Yasutaka Yoshioka to see what they'll cook up together.

Where: New Get Lucky Bar, in Dongfang Qicai Dashijie, near Nuren Jie, Chaoyang **When:** tonight, 9:30 pm **Admission:** 50 yuan **Tel:** 8448 3335

Morse Anniversary

Morse turns one! To celebrate a year of Morse parties, 300 limited edition Double Morse CDs will be given out with tickets and posters from the past year of parties on display. With the music of DJ Dio and Mickey Zhang as always.

Where: Cloud Nine Bar, 29 Zizhuyuan Lu, Haidian **When:** tonight, 10 pm **Admission:** 50 yuan **Tel:** 6417 8317

Sand

Local blues rockers Sand show their mojo all night.

Where: Yugong Yishan Bar, 1 Gongti Beilu, Chaoyang **When:** Sunday, 9:30 pm **Admission:** free **Tel:** 6415 0687



Art for Art's Sake – Voices of Songzhuang Village



Many visitors to the Songzhuang art community are curious to know how the artists in the village make a living by painting what they do. The truth is, the artists there simply paint what they want, without concern for public reaction or buyer interest. It is an idealistic attitude on full on display in the 30 works included in this show.

Where: Songzhuang Gallery, 1 North Renzhuang, Tongzhou **When:** December 1 - 30, daily 9 am – midnight (appointment only) **Admission:** 15 yuan **Tel:** 6959 8343

New Works from Li Jin

Artist Li Jin, born in Tianjin in 1958 and a graduate of the Tianjin Academy of Fine Arts, has been involved in many exhibitions in the past 15 years. This show features works that portray figures in different living situations.

Where: Courtyard Gallery, 95 Donghuamen Dajie, Dongcheng **When:** till January 14, daily 10 am – 6 pm **Admission:** free **Tel:** 6526 8882



Group Exhibition at Wang Fung

Nine famous Chinese artists, including Hu Yongkai, Feng Changjiang, Gao Wengang, Zhang Zhenhua and Wu Zhanchun, display their latest modern oil paintings.

Where: Wang Fung Art Gallery, 136 Nanchizi Dajie, Dongcheng **When:** till December 8, daily 10 am – 6 pm **Admission:** free **Tel:** 6523 3319

Exhibitions

Abstract China

This show highlights the latest wash and oil paintings, prints and synthetic materials from nine domestic artists. Each work has a distinct style and is an abstract statement on the state of modern China.

Where: Creation Art Gallery, north end of Ritan Lu, Chaoyang **When:** till December 2, daily 10 am – 7 pm **Admission:** free **Tel:** 8561 7570



Blind Shaft (Mang Jing)

This film tells the story of two itinerant Chinese miners who risk their lives under dangerous working conditions and develop questionable morals in order to survive.

Where: Cherry Lane Movie Theater, 29 Liangmaqiao Lu, Chaoyang **When:** tonight and Saturday, 8 pm **Admission:** 50 yuan **Tel:** 13501251303



I, Robot

In the year 2035, robots are everyday household items and everyone trusts them, except one slightly paranoid detective investigating what he alone believes is a crime perpetrated by a robot. The case leads him to discover a far more frightening threat to the human race. *I, Robot* uses spectacular, state-of-the-art visual effects to bring a world of robots to life.

Where: UME International Cineplex, (Huaxing Guoji Yingcheng), 44 Shuangyushu Kexueyuan, Haidian **When:** opens tonight **Tel:** 6261 2851

of the Chinese People's Liberation Army will stage 12 performances of this Chinese musical depicting the lives of contemporary soldiers in China.

Where: China Theatre, Xisanhuan Beilu, Haidian **When:** November 29 – December 15, 7:30 pm **Admission:** 60-180 yuan **Tel:** 6843 0560

Movies



Garfield: The Movie

Directed by Peter Hewitt, with the voices of Bill Murray, Stephen Tobolowsky and Debra Messing. After Odie is kidnapped by a dog trainer, Garfield feels responsible for setting the trap. So he gets up from his favorite spot and devises a scheme to rescue his fellow pet. Based on Jim Davis' long-running comic strip.

Where: UME International Cineplex, (Huaxing Guoji Yingcheng), 44 Shuangyushu Kexueyuan, Haidian **When:** opens December 1 **Tel:** 6261 2851

Performances



Grand Magic: Labyrinth

After a great run of shows this summer, a new version of the grand fairy tale play *Labyrinth*, tweaked to appeal to children, takes the stage this weekend.

Where: Haidian Theatre, 28 Zhongguancun Dajie, Haidian **When:** tonight through Sunday, 7:30 pm **Admission:** 80-380 yuan **Tel:** 6255 5898

Peking Opera: Story of a Golden Turtle (Jin Gui Ji)

This classic opera tells the story of the scholar Zhang Xuan, who sends for his family in Henan Province after he passes the imperial examination. But his selfish wife goes to China's capital alone without telling Zhang's elderly mother and brother, Zhang Yi, who must fish every day to support them. One day, a golden turtle tells Zhang Yi that his elder brother has become magistrate of Yangfu county and his mother sends him to find his brother to find out what happened.

Where: Chang An Grand Theater, 7 Jianguomennei Dajie, Dongcheng **When:** Saturday, 2 pm **Admission:** 20-120 yuan **Tel:** 6510 1310

A Soldier's Diary

The Song and Dance Ensemble of the Political Department

Music



Chyi (Qi Yu) in Concert

Since low-key pop singer Chyi rocked Taiwan with her debut show in 2003, she has assembled an enviable list of popular songs, including *Olive* and *Walking on a Country Road*. For her first Beijing concert, she will be joined on stage by her brother Chyichi, another dazzling Chinese pop star.

Where: Capital Gymnasium, 5 Baishiqiao Lu, Xizhimenwai Dajie, Haidian **When:** December 3, 7:30 pm **Admission:** 280-1,000 yuan **Tel:** 6417 7845

Ear to the Ground

An Ear to the Ground presents its new "On The Ground" series, set to feature musical variety from Beijing, greater China and the world. This concert stars Pure Land, the world music creations of Hu Miaoyu, who collects, compiles and interprets traditional and tribal sounds from around China. Up next is pop singer Kelly Cha, a singer-songwriter preparing her first album.

Where: Get Lucky Bar, east of University of Business and Economics (Jingmao Daxue) south gate **When:** Saturday, 9:30 pm **Admission:** free **Tel:** 6529 9109

TV and Radio Highlights

HBO

26 Friday

Child's Day 7:30 pm

27 Saturday

Kangaroo Jack 9 pm

28 Sunday

John Q 8 pm

29 Monday

Deep Shock 9 pm

30 Tuesday

Virtuosity 8:30 pm

1 Wednesday

The Ring 10:30 pm

2 Thursday

Blood Word 11 pm

CCTV-9

Monday – Friday

Around China 6:30 am

Culture Express 8:30 am

Nature and Science /

Chinese Civilization 11:30 am

Culture Express 2:30 pm

Nature and Science /

Chinese Civilization 5:30 pm

Dialogue 7:30 pm

News Updates /

Asia Today 8 pm

Sports Scene 11:15 pm

Saturday

Travelogue 9:30 am

Center Stage 11:30 am

Sunday

Sports Weekend 10 am

Documentary 10:30 am

This Week 12:30 am

China Radio International 91.5 FM

Monday – Friday

Easy FM Afternoon 2-7 pm

Fun in Beijing 5-5:30 pm

Joy FM 9:05-11 pm

Saturday

Music Memories 8:05-11 am

Euro Hit 40 12:05-1 pm

Musique Sans Frontières 6:05-8 pm

Joy FM 9:05-11 pm

Sunday

Music Memories 8:05-11 am

Jazz Beat 6:05-8 pm

Joy FM 9:05-11 pm

We are glad to receive your feedback. We will print employment, language-exchange and accommodation information for individuals. Feel free to email us at bjtodayinfo@ynet.com or call 6590 2518

By Zhang Jianzhong

By Peng Juan

On the upper reaches of the Yellow River in southeast Qinghai Province, Tongren County is known as the “home of Regong art.” With a history of more than 700 years, this Tibetan cultural legacy is an integral part of life for the local inhabitants, the majority of whom either make a living or supplement their income from the artworks they produce.

Lying 188 kilometers south of the provincial capital Xining, Tongren County is the center of Huangnan Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture. The road passes through several Han and Hui villages on the northern reaches of the Yellow River before entering the predominantly Tibetan-inhabited county, known locally as Regong.

Regong means “golden valley” in Tibetan. In the late 15 century, the Gelugpa, or Yellow Hat Sect of Tibetan Buddhism was introduced to the valley. With the construction of monasteries and temples, art and handicrafts flourished, and by the mid-17th century, almost every local family produced either paintings or sculptures.

Tongren, the county seat, has under its jurisdiction two towns, ten villages and 75 hamlets. The four villages around the town of Longwu – Wutun, Nianduhu, Gasairi, and Guomari, are known as the “birthplaces of Regong art.” There is a monastery in each village, two in Wutun.

Art of Tibet

An important genre of Tibetan Buddhist art, Regong art includes thangka, barbola, sculptures made from clay, wood and yak butter, and architectural painting. Traditionally, the subject matter of the artworks was Buddha in his various forms, Bodhisattvas, Buddhist guardians and other deities, and Buddhist stories. However in recent times, the telling of more worldly stories, including local practices and customs, has become a popular trend, giving fresh life to the ancient genre.

The early works of Regong art are characterized by simplicity. The influence of Indian and Nepalese painting is evident in the coarse strokes and plain colors. The later stages of its development saw a maturity of technique and more elaborate decoration. The 19th century was the heyday of Regong art, when gold, silver, pearl, agate and other precious stones found their way into the works. Most of the murals and sculptures in Tibetan areas were the works of Regong artists.

Stroll the narrow lanes

There are numerous monasteries of both the Gelugpa and Nyingma, or Red Hat Sect, in Regong. Many were built during the Ming and Qing dynasties. The complexes are typical Tibetan groups of pagoda-roofed monastic buildings among the more prosaic flat-topped dwellings for the monks, all within a walled compound on a hillside.

Almost every village has its own monastery, which serves as both Buddhist center and the cradle of artists. Children go to the monasteries to learn the art. When they are 15 years old, they have to make a choice, either to resume a secular life or become a monk.

Stumbling over the broken cobblestones and litter that mark the narrow lanes, you'll meet some of the artists, all locals, who

are so numerous in this valley. Both thangka painters and clay sculptors take advantage of the clear light on the sharp sunny morning. Seated in front of a simple table at a balcony, a man is busily creating a small dragon using wire and the rich red local clay. Some finished pieces lie along the balcony, drying in the sun and attesting to his morning's labors. Further along sits a painter, his latest canvas stretched over a crude but effective frame of rough wood roped together at the corners, a small picture of the subject pinned to the frame. Red-robed monks cheerfully come and go, calling out greetings and gossiping as they pass.

Longwu Monastery

Arriving in the town of Longwu, visitors should not miss a visit to Longwu Monastery, a good example of the influence of Regong art.

Located in the south of town, it is one of the six major monasteries of Tibetan Buddhism in Qinghai Province, with 500 monks. Longwu Monastery ranks third behind Labrang in Gansu and Ta'er Monastery in Qinghai in terms of scale, status and influence.

It was initially built by the Sakya Sect in 1301 of the Yuan Dynasty (1271-1368). In the Ming and Qing dynasties, the Living Buddha system was formed here and the monastery changed to the Gelugpa Sect. From then, it dominated the region in religion and politics for some 200 years. The architecture of the Scripture Hall and other halls in the monastery is majestic, with gorgeous decorations and a rich collection historical relics.

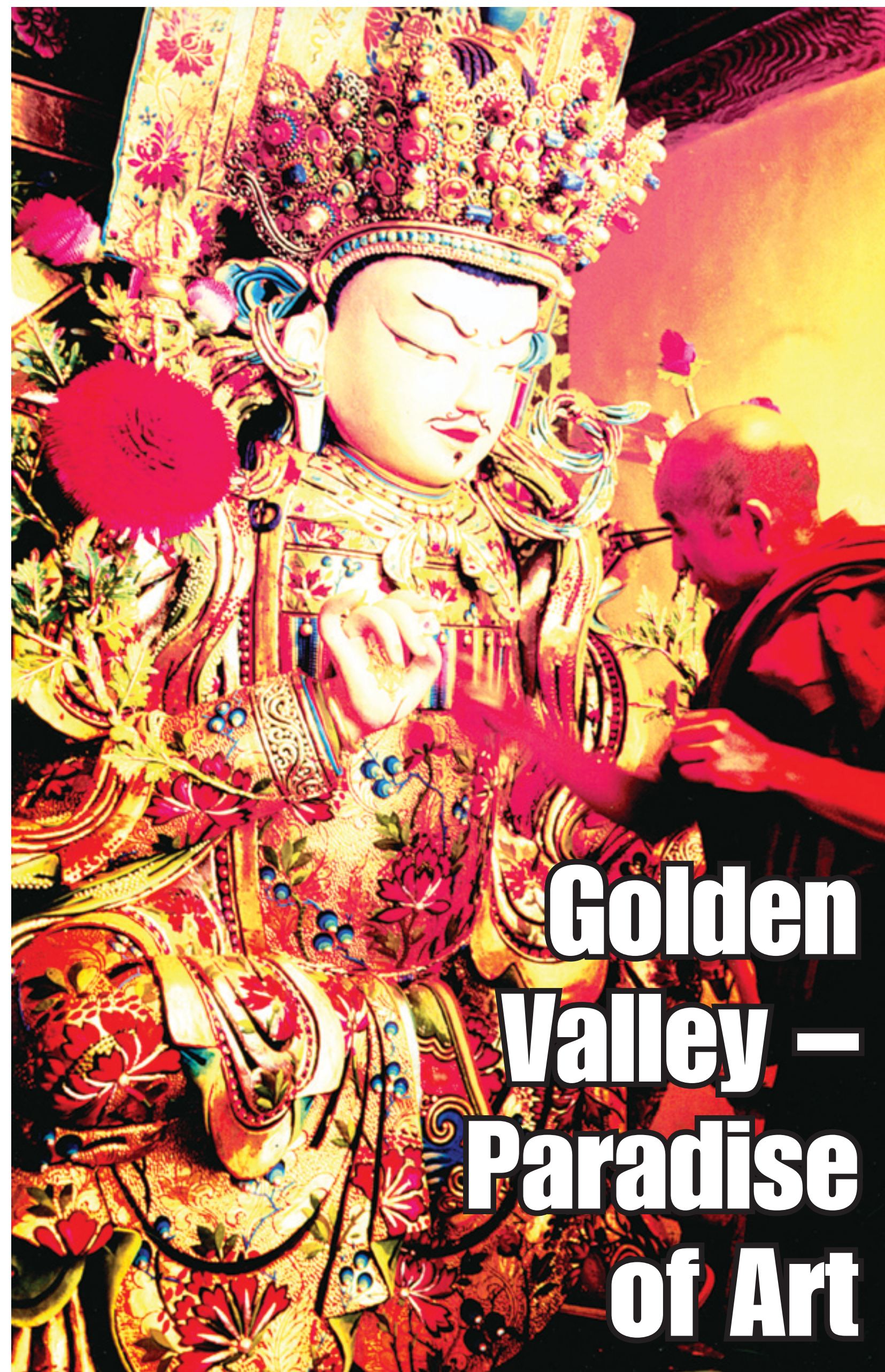
Every inch of the interior – pillars, door lintels, beams and walls – is bursting with vibrant color, design, images and stone-carvings. In the main hall are enormous gilded statues of Sakyamuni, Avalokiteshvara (Guanyin), Bodhisattva Manjusri, Buddha's warrior attendants and the four deva-kings. The statues are almost engulfed by tiers upon tiers of beautiful murals and thangkas. Each painting seems to be more gorgeous than the last – the colors glowing and illuminated with generous touches of gold. Skillfully carved and painted niches and brackets separate the different murals, each illustrating a tale from Buddhist lore.

Museum art

Regong Art Museum is just a short walk from Longwu Monastery. A palace of Regong art treasures, it boasts an impressive collection of thangkas, sculptures and sand table designs.

The unusual art form of thangka is intended to nurture humankind's path toward enlightenment, from the mundane world to sacred reality. Cotton canvas and linen cloth are the common fabrics for thangkas, while silk cloth is reserved for important subjects.

Before painting begins, the fabric is stitched along the edges with flax thread and stretched on a specially-made wooden frame. Then a paste made of animal glue mixed with talcum powder is spread over the surface to seal it. After the paste is scraped off and the cloth has thoroughly dried, the artist outlines the image using a charcoal stick. Coloring comes last. The pigments are mixed with animal glue and ox bile to give the luster permanence. The whole pro-



Golden Valley – Paradise of Art

cess usually takes one month or longer to complete.

Barbola

Barbola is sub-categorized into “*jian dui*” (literally, to cut and pile) and “*ci xiu*” (embroidery). The barbola in Regong is a special form of “cutting and piling.” Artisans select silks and satins of different colors according to the type of expression desired, cut them into human, animal, flower or bird shapes, and then paste the patterns onto a pre-cut paper model. They pieces are then stacked from dense to light colors. Since the middle of the barbola is slightly convex, the work creates a strong three-dimensional effect that looks like a colored embossment made of silk.

Sculpture

The art of sculpture in Regong mainly includes clay sculpture, woodcarving and brick engraving, among which clay sculpting is the most common. Clay sculpture is usually

seen in conjunction with monastic architecture. Woodcarving is mainly employed to make decorative patterns on door lintels. Brick engraving is mainly seen as architectural decorative patterns, dragons and phoenixes and pairs of lions on roof ridges, beasts on flying roofs and bas-reliefs on walls.

Master artists in Wutun

The most rewarding outing for those interested in Tibetan art is a visit to the four villages around Longwu, especially Wutun. Wutun alone boasts more than 100 families of artists.

Wutun is famous throughout Tibet for its beautiful thangka artworks. The skillful application of gold powder, cinnabar and azurite gives the paintings a strong decorative effect. The style and techniques have been passed down through several generations of local families, usually from father to son.

Boasting two monaster-

ies, the village is divided into Upper and Lower Wutun. Living within the two monasteries are some 50 renowned thangka artists. The two villages are full of monks and laypeople turning out masses of Buddhist art for monasteries as far away as western Tibet.

The monastery in Upper Wutun, or Sengeshong Yago in Tibetan, is magnificently decorated. The surface of the entire assembly hall has been carved and painted with traditional Regong designs. The monks in the upper village are friendly, and happy to show visitors their work.

The most celebrated painter of this village is Shawu Tsering, one of Tibet's last “living masters” of the art of thangka painting. At the ripe old age of 80, he is still painting, sometimes with the aid of his son.

He was formally trained in his youth, and obtained his inspiration from many sources, including the famous frescoes of the Dun-

huang caves, the Ajanta frescoes of India, and Central Asian painting. He won international fame early in his painting career and has left many classic works in numerous monasteries around the world.

Lower Wutun, or Sengeshong Mago, is 10 minutes' walk from the upper village. Its monastery is the center for ceremonies and festivities that draw crowds of worshippers. Also important in terms of Regong art, the monastery has its own exquisite carvings and murals.

Red gates of Guomari

From Wutun, you can see across the Longwu River the villages of Guomari and Nianduhu. Both have fine examples of the Regong art, some old and some new.

Guomari in Tibetan means “red gate.” This village used to be very wealthy, and the inhabitants were all able to afford to decorate their gates with red copper in the old days, hence the red coloring.

Guomari Monastery is marked by a spectacular five-tiered chorten, or stupa. The climb to the top of the 38-meter structure is not for the faint hearted, as the ledges become increasingly narrow closer to the apex. The reward, however, is a spectacular view down the valley. The monks here are from the Tu ethnic group, unlike their Tibetan brethren.

Getting there: A return airfare from Beijing to Xining ranges from 1,460 to 2,920 yuan. There is a daily bus from Xining to Tongren, leaving Xining long-distance bus station at 7 am and arriving in Tongren at noon.

Accommodation: The Huangnan Hotel in Longwu has standard rooms for 80 yuan. Local dishes are served.

Travel tips:

The four villages near Longwu can be reached by local bus or three-wheel taxicab. A more convenient option is to charter a car, which is not expensive.